SWAN

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有吉京子

＊愛蔵版＊

SWAN

―白鳥―

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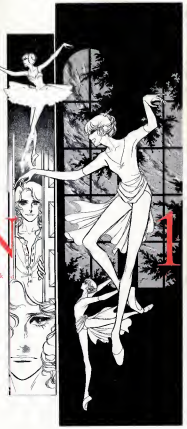

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ISBN978-4-582-28761-9
C0973 ¥1200E

平凡社　定価：本体1200円（税別）

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◆愛蔵版

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——白鳥——

ariyoshi kyoko

1

平凡社

C O N T E N T S

SWAN —白鳥— 1 ---------- 003

SWAN —*Variation 1*— ---------- 335

A Collection of Illustrations ---------- 340

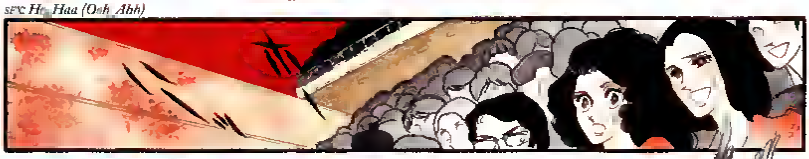
SWAN
白鳥

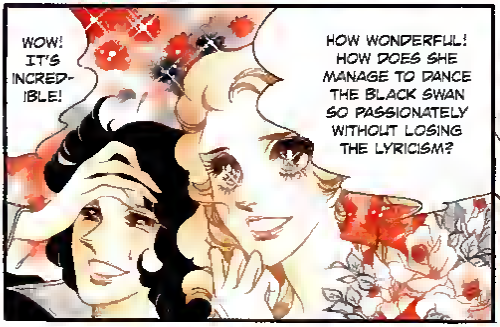
有吉京子

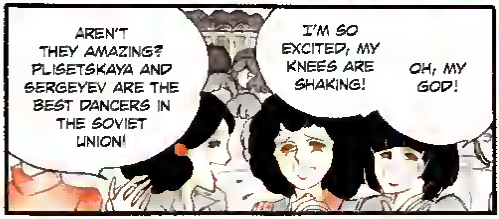
WHAT? A TICKET?
Swan Lake
Bolshoi Ballet
SORRY. EVEN THE BALCONY WAS SOLD OUT MONTHS AGO.
NO, YOU CAN'T! BESIDES, IT'S ALREADY THE END OF ACT II, SO EVEN IF YOU GO IN NOW...
HEY, WAIT!
YOU CAN'T GO IN! STOP!
HUFF... HUFF...

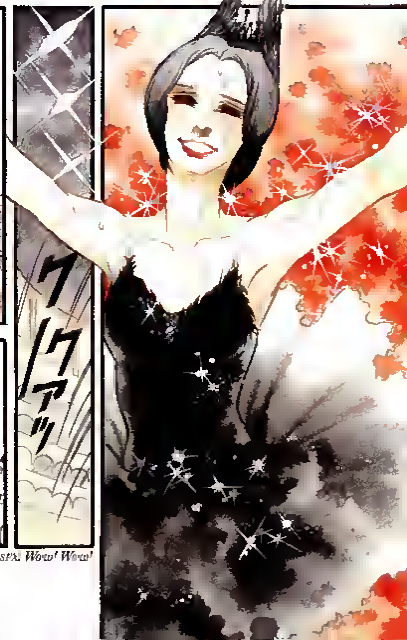
I CAN'T BELIEVE WE'LL GET TO SEE PLISETSKAYA PERFORM THE BLACK SWAN!
WE'LL GET TO SEE THE GRAND FOUETTÉ EN TOURNANT, WITH THE 32 TURNS.
AT LAST, THE BLACK SWAN SCENE OF ACT III IS NEXT.
SHHH! IT'S STARTING!
WOW!
WOW!
SFX: Patam... (Shut...)
SFX: Pachi pachi (Clap clap)

SFX: Ho Haa (Ooh, Ahh)



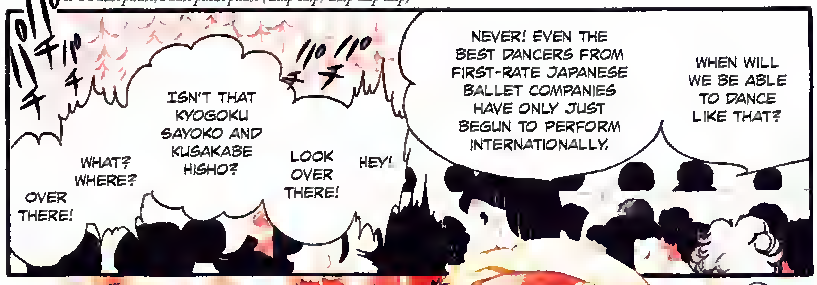

WOW! IT'S INCRED-IBLE!
HOW WONDERFUL! HOW DOES SHE MANAGE TO DANCE THE BLACK SWAN SO PASSIONATELY WITHOUT LOSING THE LYRICISM?

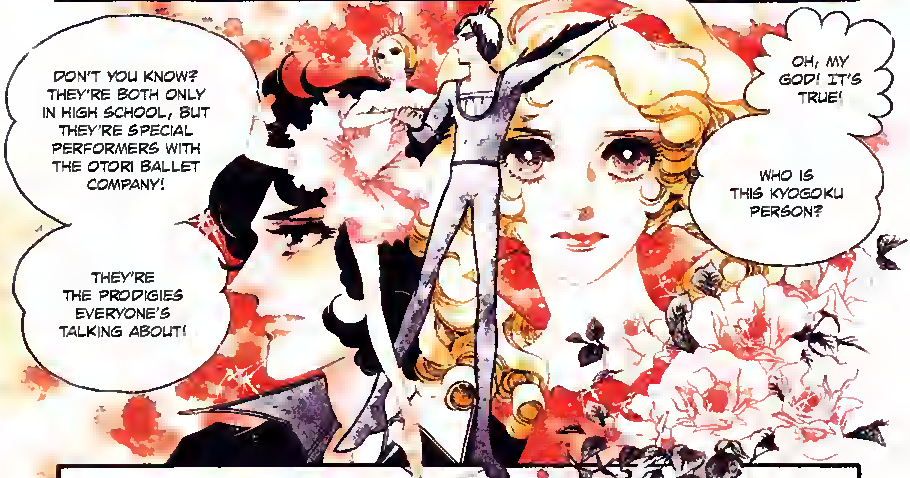

AREN'T THEY AMAZING? PLISETSKAYA AND SERGEYEV ARE THE BEST DANCERS IN THE SOVIET UNION!
I'M SO EXCITED, MY KNEES ARE SHAKING!
OH, MY GOD!

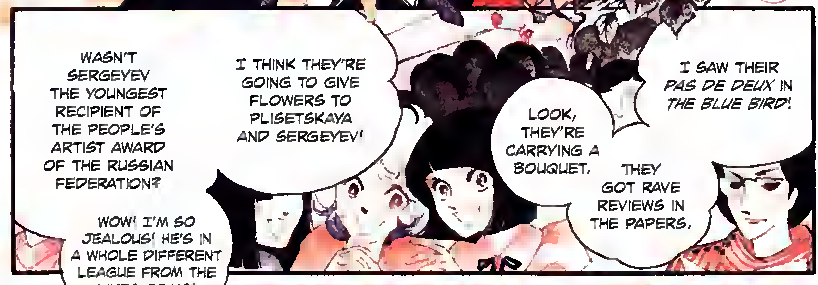


SFX: Wow! Wow!

SFX: Pachi pachi, Pachi pachi pachi (Clap clap, Clap clap clap)


NEVER! EVEN THE BEST DANCERS FROM FIRST-RATE JAPANESE BALLET COMPANIES HAVE ONLY JUST BEGUN TO PERFORM INTERNATIONALLY.
WHEN WILL WE BE ABLE TO DANCE LIKE THAT?
ISN'T THAT KYOGOKU SAYOKO AND KUSAKABE HISHO?
LOOK OVER THERE!
HEY!
WHAT? WHERE?
OVER THERE!


DON'T YOU KNOW? THEY'RE BOTH ONLY IN HIGH SCHOOL, BUT THEY'RE SPECIAL PERFORMERS WITH THE OTORI BALLET COMPANY!
THEY'RE THE PRODIGIES EVERYONE'S TALKING ABOUT!
OH, MY GOD! IT'S TRUE!
WHO IS THIS KYOGOKU PERSON?

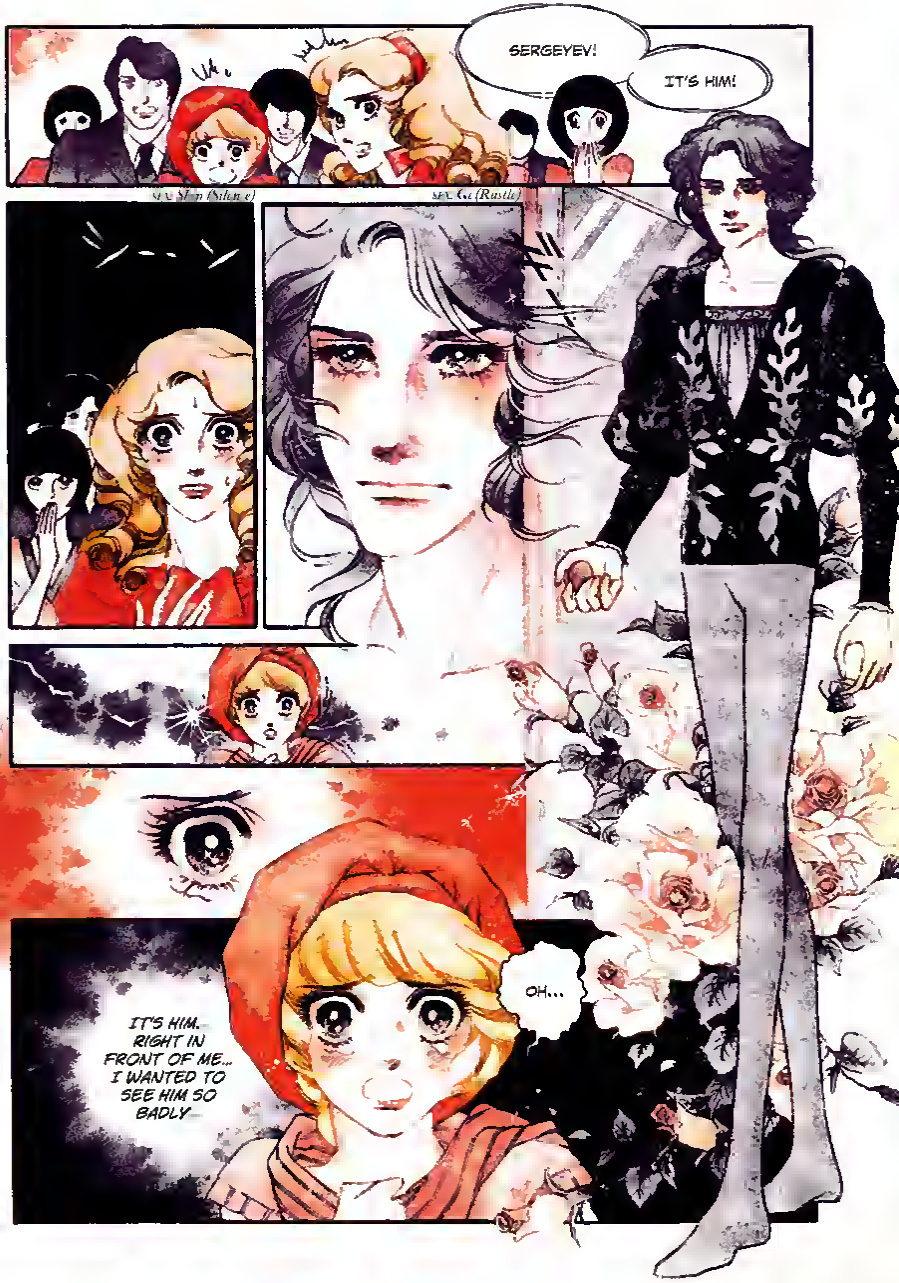

WASN'T SERGEYEV THE YOUNGEST RECIPIENT OF THE PEOPLE'S ARTIST AWARD OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION?
I THINK THEY'RE GOING TO GIVE FLOWERS TO PLISETSKAYA AND SERGEYEV!
I SAW THEIR *PAS DE DEUX* IN *THE BLUE BIRD*!
LOOK, THEY'RE CARRYING A BOUQUET.
THEY GOT RAVE REVIEWS IN THE PAPERS.
WOW! I'M SO JEALOUS! HE'S IN A WHOLE DIFFERENT LEAGUE FROM THE LIKES OF US!

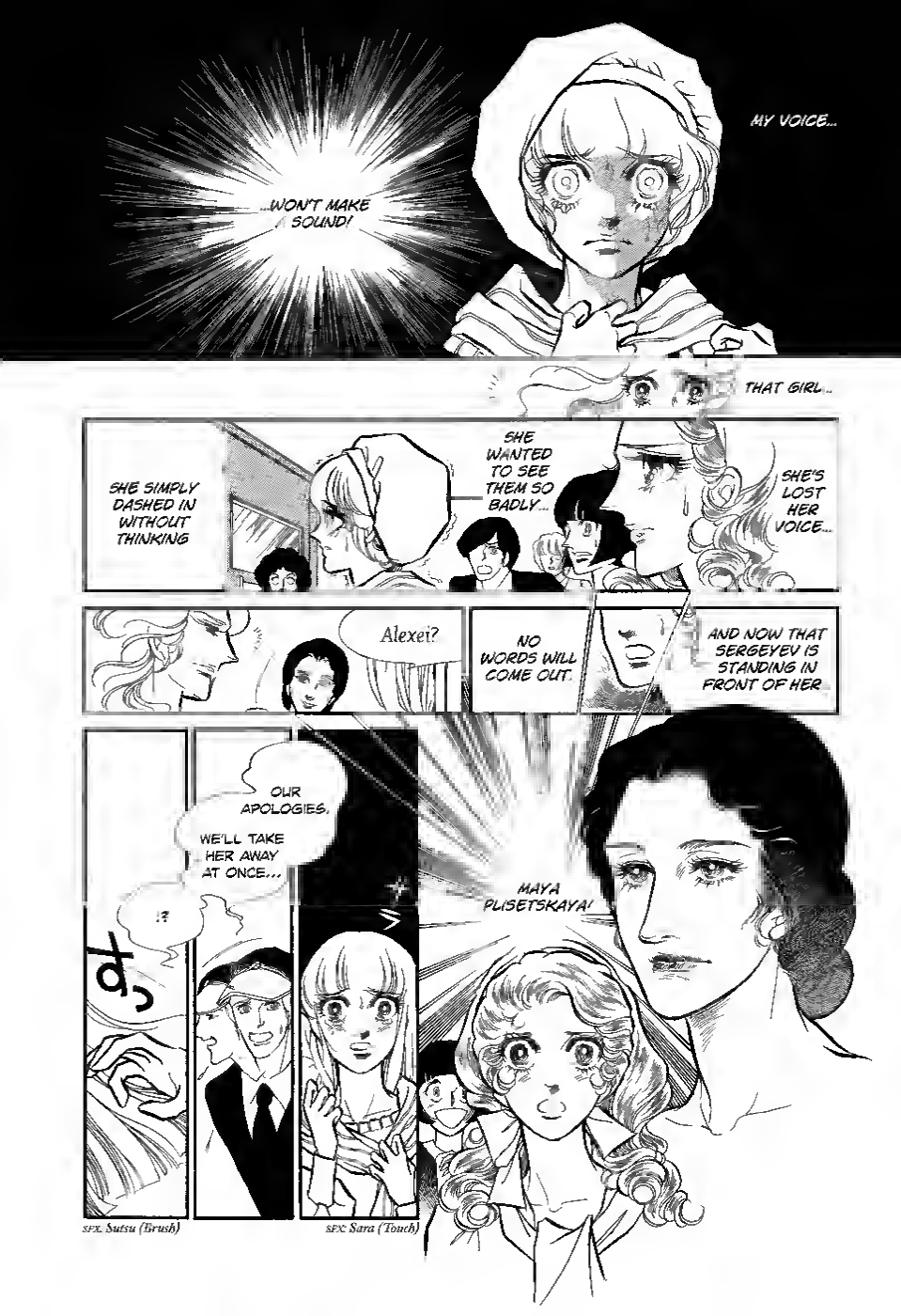
SFX: Jiiiiiiiiiiii (Buzzzzzz)

HERE WE ARE STILL ADMIRING THE ENCORE... WE'LL HAVE TO HURRY BACKSTAGE WITH THE BOUQUET!
Wow!
OH, DEAR.
Wow!
SFX. Pachi pachi pachi / Clap clap clap
YOU'LL HAVE TO WAIT TO GO BACKSTAGE.
BUT... I'M HERE FROM THE OTORI BALLET SCHOOL TO PRESENT FLOWERS...
OVER THERE! THERE SHE IS!
SFX. Kyaa, kyaa
SFX. Wow, wow, wow!

PLEASE! LET ME SEE SERGEYEV JUST ONCE!
SORRY, WE HAVE A PROBLEM... SOME GIRL JUST CHARGED INTO THE THEATER AND TRIED TO GET BACKSTAGE.
YOU'LL HAVE TO...
I BEG YOU!
I'LL PAY FOR THE TICKET!
I CAME ALL THE WAY FROM HOKKAIDO! I JUST WANTED TO SEE THEIR PERFORMANCE!
I JUST HAVE TO... SEE PLISETSKAYA AND SERGEYEV...
NO! LET ME GO!
Dressing Room
PLEASE... LET HER GO...
Dressing Room
HURRY AND TAKE HER OUTSIDE!
WE CAN'T ALLOW SPECIAL TREATMENT JUST FOR YOU!
THERE'S A LOT OF PEOPLE WHO COULDN'T GET TICKETS FOR TODAY'S PERFORMANCE.

SFX: *Kachaya (Ker-chick)*


SERGEYEV!
IT'S HIM!
IT'S HIM... RIGHT IN FRONT OF ME... I WANTED TO SEE HIM SO BADLY...
OH...

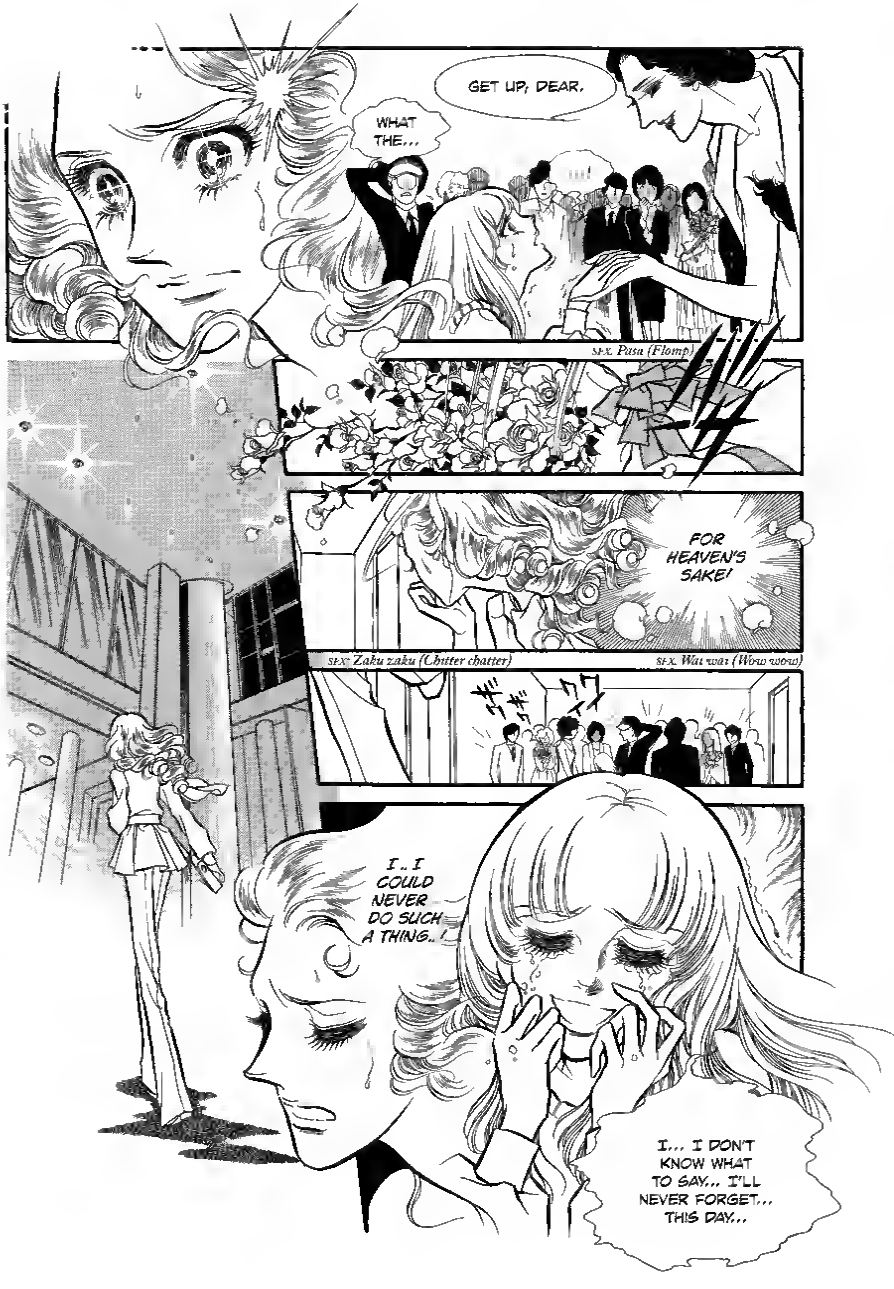

MY VOICE...
...WON'T MAKE SOUND!
THAT GIRL...
SHE SIMPLY DASHED IN WITHOUT THINKING
SHE WANTED TO SEE THEM SO BADLY...
SHE'S LOST HER VOICE...
Alexei?
NO WORDS WILL COME OUT.
AND NOW THAT SERGEYEV IS STANDING IN FRONT OF HER...
OUR APOLOGIES.
WE'LL TAKE HER AWAY AT ONCE...
!?
MAYA PLISETSKAYA!
SFX. Sutsu (Brush)
SFX. Sara (Touch)

SHE'S DANCING!
IT'S THE BLACK SWAN THAT PLISETSKAYA JUST PERFORMED!
NOT JUST ANY DANCE

WHAT IS SHE...?
SFX: Don (Thud)
SFX: Zuden (Fall)
OW!

SFX. Kusu kusu (Snicker snicker)
WHAT'S WITH HER?
OH! HOW AWFUL!
SFX. Kusu kusu (Snicker snicker)
HUH?
C'MON, LET'S GO.
GET UP.
SOB
OH
OH
OH...

IT DELIGHTS US MORE THAN ANY WORDS OF PRAISE.
THIS YOUNG LADY WAS VERY DEEPLY MOVED BY OUR PERFORMANCE.
SHE EXPRESSED THOSE HEARTFELT EMOTIONS THROUGH DANCE.

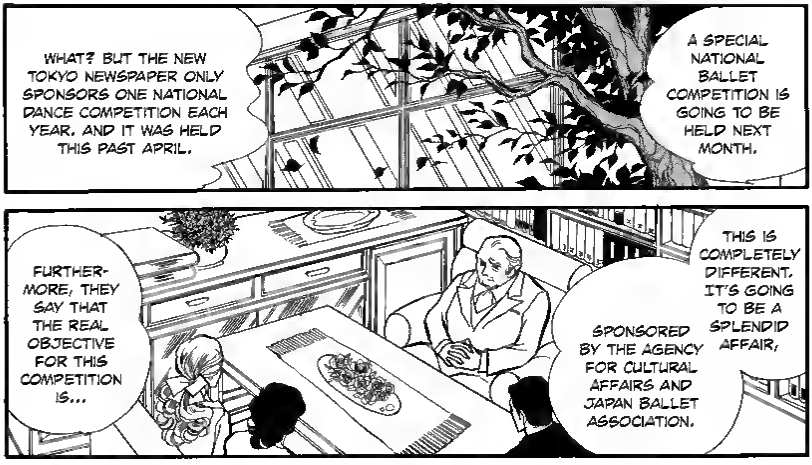

GET UP, DEAR.
WHAT THE...
SFX: Pasa (Flomp)
FOR HEAVEN'S SAKE!
SFX: Zaku zaku (Chitter chatter)
SFX: Wai wai (Wow wow)
I.. I COULD NEVER DO SUCH A THING..!
I... I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO SAY... I'LL NEVER FORGET... THIS DAY...

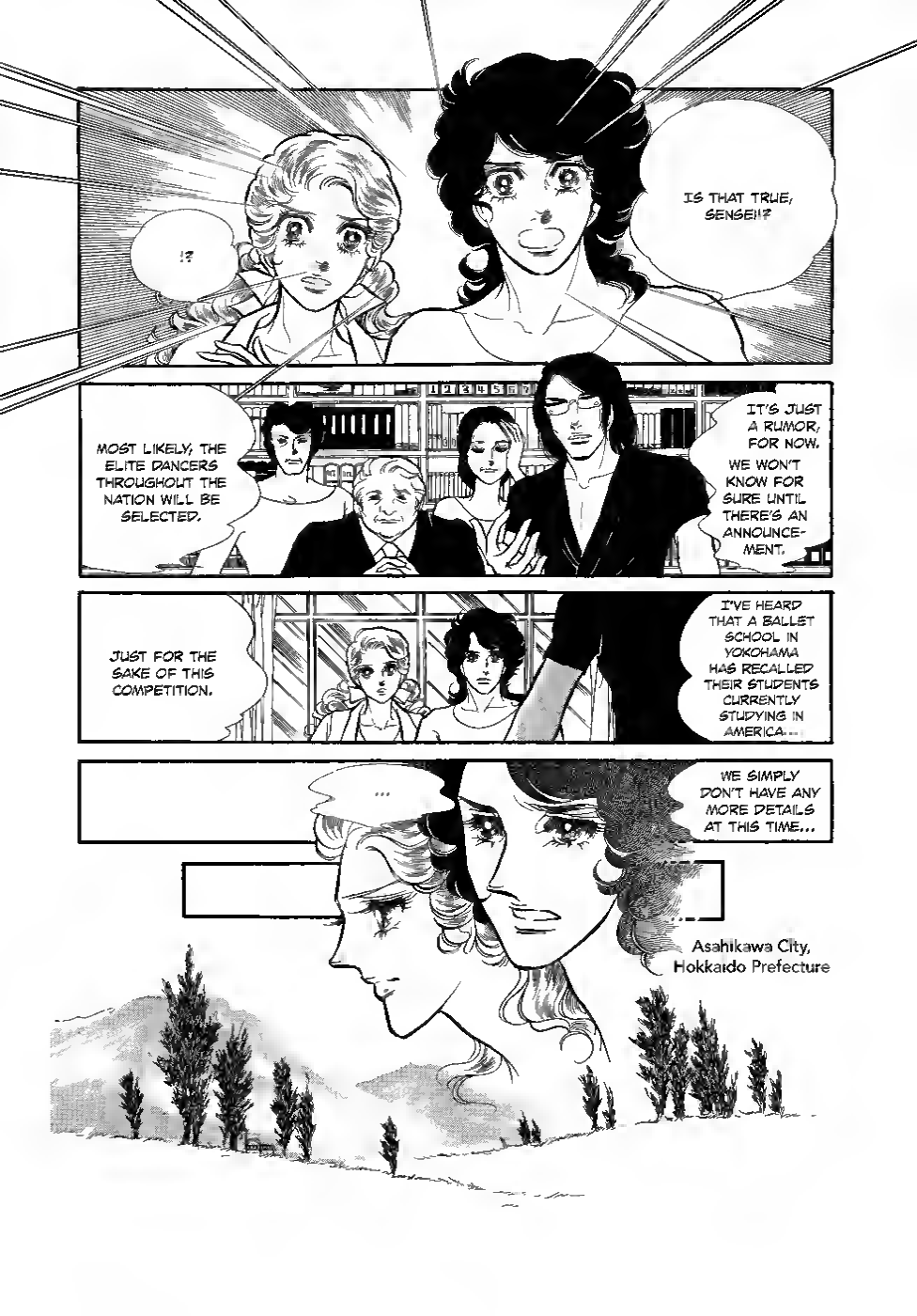
Otori Ballet School
Headmaster: Otori Koichiro
WOW! THE NERVE!
IT WAS SHOCKING!
AND THEN, SHE JUST TOOK OFF HER SHOES AND STARTED DANCING RIGHT THEN AND THERE, IN FRONT OF EVERYBODY!
KYOGOKU-SAN!
STOP IT... WE'RE IN THE MIDDLE OF CLASS!

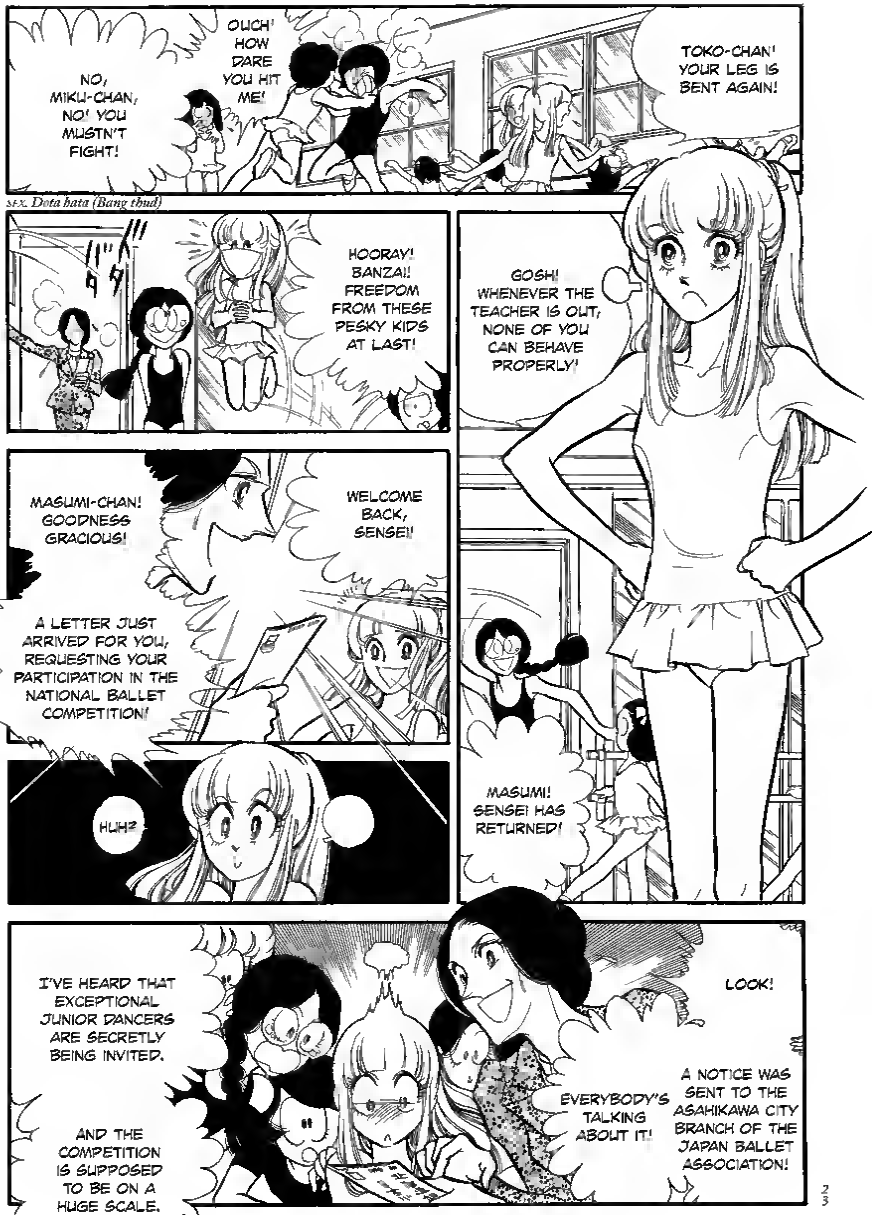
FROWNS DON'T SUIT YOU. YOU'RE THE QUEEN OF OTORI BALLET SCHOOL.
IF YOU SAY SO, BUT...
OH, YOU!
IT'S NOTHING ...
YOU LOOK SO SERIOUS.
WHAT'S WRONG?
HISHO...
LET'S PRACTICE THE *PAS DE DEUX* BEFORE THE INSTRUCTOR SHOWS UP.
SOUNDS GREAT.
WE'RE SO LUCKY TO SEE THEM, THANKS TO THIS GROUP CLASS!
THEY'RE SO FABULOUS!
WHAT!?
OH, MY GOSH!
KYOGOKU-SAN AND KUSAKABE-SAN ARE GOING TO DANCE TOGETHER!

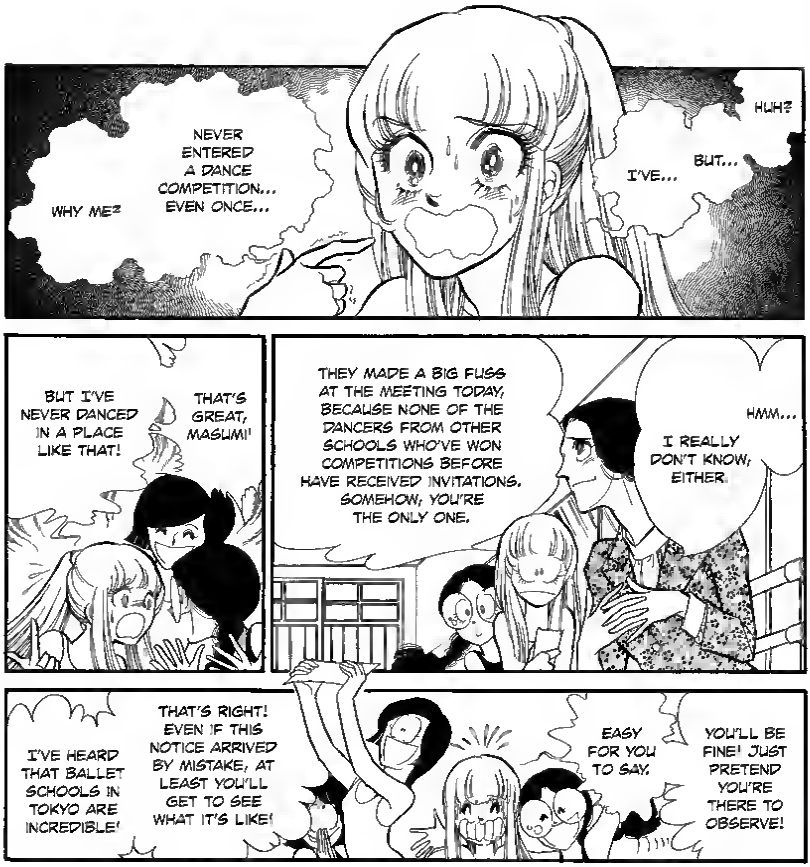
GOSH!
I'M JUST FLOORED ANY TIME I SEE THEM PERFORM!
SO LOVELY!
WHAT DO YOU EXPECT? AFTER ALL, THEY'RE THE TOP STUDENTS OF THE OTORI BALLET SCHOOL!
IT'S RUMORED THEY'RE ALREADY BEING GROOMED TO JOIN THE OTORI COMPANY AS LEAD DANCERS!
Hoh!

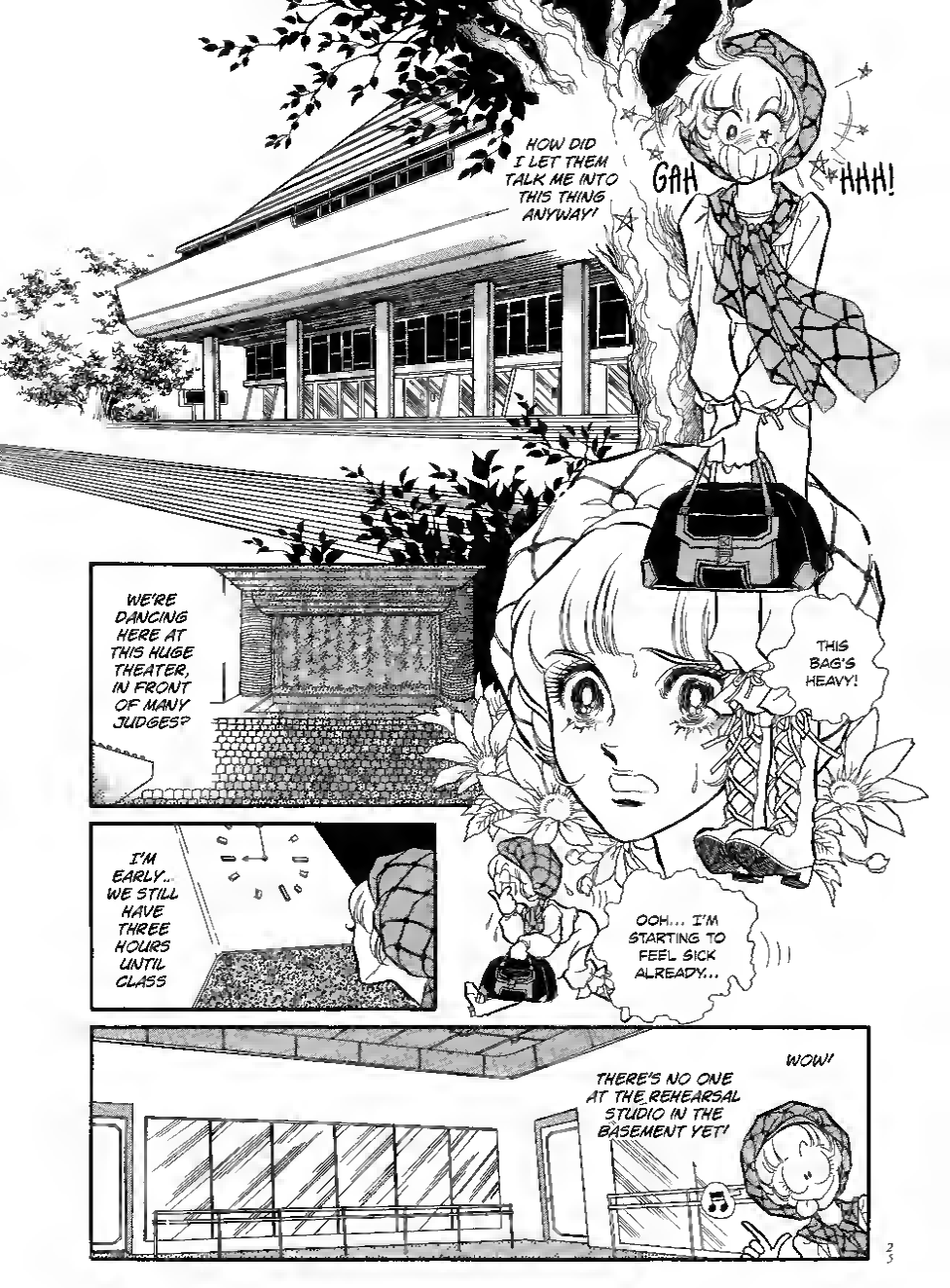
SHE'S BEAUTIFUL... GRACEFUL.. A LITHE BODY.. SHE HAS EVERYTHING IT TAKES TO BECOME A PRIMA BALLERINA
KYOGOKU AND KUSAKABE, REPORT TO THE HEADMASTER'S OFFICE IMMEDIATELY.
WOW!!
Phew
?
SFX. Pan pan (Clap Clap)
SFX: Kacha... (Creak.)


WHAT? BUT THE NEW TOKYO NEWSPAPER ONLY SPONSORS ONE NATIONAL DANCE COMPETITION EACH YEAR. AND IT WAS HELD THIS PAST APRIL.
A SPECIAL NATIONAL BALLET COMPETITION IS GOING TO BE HELD NEXT MONTH.
FURTHER-MORE, THEY SAY THAT THE REAL OBJECTIVE FOR THIS COMPETITION IS...
SPONSORED BY THE AGENCY FOR CULTURAL AFFAIRS AND JAPAN BALLET ASSOCIATION.
THIS IS COMPLETELY DIFFERENT. IT'S GOING TO BE A SPLENDID AFFAIR.

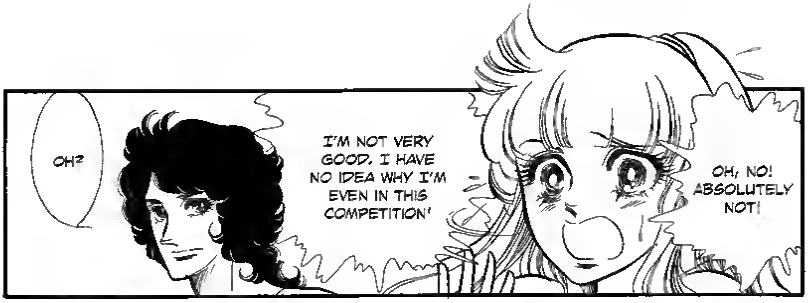

IS THAT TRUE, SENSEI!?
!?
IT'S JUST A RUMOR, FOR NOW.
WE WON'T KNOW FOR SURE UNTIL THERE'S AN ANNOUNCEMENT.
MOST LIKELY, THE ELITE DANCERS THROUGHOUT THE NATION WILL BE SELECTED.
I'VE HEARD THAT A BALLET SCHOOL IN YOKOHAMA HAS RECALLED THEIR STUDENTS CURRENTLY STUDYING IN AMERICA...
JUST FOR THE SAKE OF THIS COMPETITION.
WE SIMPLY DON'T HAVE ANY MORE DETAILS AT THIS TIME...
...
...
Asahikawa City, Hokkaido Prefecture

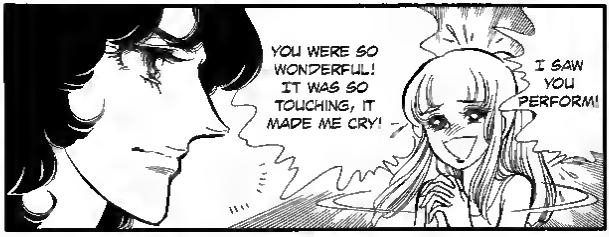

NO, MIKU-CHAN, NO! YOU MUSTN'T FIGHT!
OUCH! HOW DARE YOU HIT ME!
TOKO-CHAN! YOUR LEG IS BENT AGAIN!
SFX. Dota bata (Bang thud)
HOORAY! BANZAI! FREEDOM FROM THESE PESKY KIDS AT LAST!
GOSH! WHENEVER THE TEACHER IS OUT, NONE OF YOU CAN BEHAVE PROPERLY!
MASUMI-CHAN! GOODNESS GRACIOUS!
WELCOME BACK, SENSE!!
A LETTER JUST ARRIVED FOR YOU, REQUESTING YOUR PARTICIPATION IN THE NATIONAL BALLET COMPETITION!
HUH?
MASUMI! SENSE! HAS RETURNED!
I'VE HEARD THAT EXCEPTIONAL JUNIOR DANCERS ARE SECRETLY BEING INVITED.
AND THE COMPETITION IS SUPPOSED TO BE ON A HUGE SCALE.
LOOK!
EVERYBODY'S TALKING ABOUT IT!
A NOTICE WAS SENT TO THE ASAHIKAWA CITY BRANCH OF THE JAPAN BALLET ASSOCIATION!

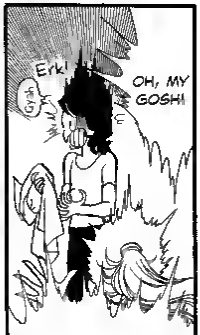

WHY ME?
NEVER ENTERED A DANCE COMPETITION... EVEN ONCE...
I'VE...
BUT...
HUH?
BUT I'VE NEVER DANCED IN A PLACE LIKE THAT!
THAT'S GREAT, MASUMI!
THEY MADE A BIG FUSS AT THE MEETING TODAY, BECAUSE NONE OF THE DANCERS FROM OTHER SCHOOLS WHO'VE WON COMPETITIONS BEFORE HAVE RECEIVED INVITATIONS. SOMEHOW, YOU'RE THE ONLY ONE.
I REALLY DON'T KNOW, EITHER.
HMM...
I'VE HEARD THAT BALLET SCHOOLS IN TOKYO ARE INCREDIBLE!
THAT'S RIGHT! EVEN IF THIS NOTICE ARRIVED BY MISTAKE, AT LEAST YOU'LL GET TO SEE WHAT IT'S LIKE!
EASY FOR YOU TO SAY.
YOU'LL BE FINE! JUST PRETEND YOU'RE THERE TO OBSERVE!
I HAVE NO IDEA WHY THIS NOTICE ARRIVED FOR ME - BUT BEING ABLE TO DANCE TO MY HEART'S CONTENT JUST ONCE, AT SUCH A GRAND COMPETITION, WOULD SURELY BE A WONDERFUL FEELING.
I GUESS SO.. BALLET IS SOMETHING I'VE REALLY LOVED SINCE I WAS A LITTLE GIRL..
HOPE!!

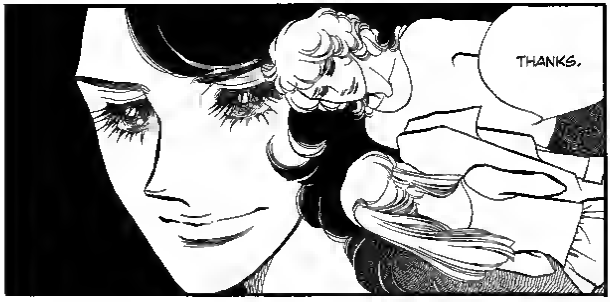

HOW DID I LET THEM TALK ME INTO THIS THING ANYWAY!
GAH
HHH!
THIS BAG'S HEAVY!
OOH... I'M STARTING TO FEEL SICK ALREADY...
WE'RE DANCING HERE AT THIS HUGE THEATER, IN FRONT OF MANY JUDGES?
I'M EARLY.. WE STILL HAVE THREE HOURS UNTIL CLASS
WOW!
THERE'S NO ONE AT THE REHEARSAL STUDIO IN THE BASEMENT YET!

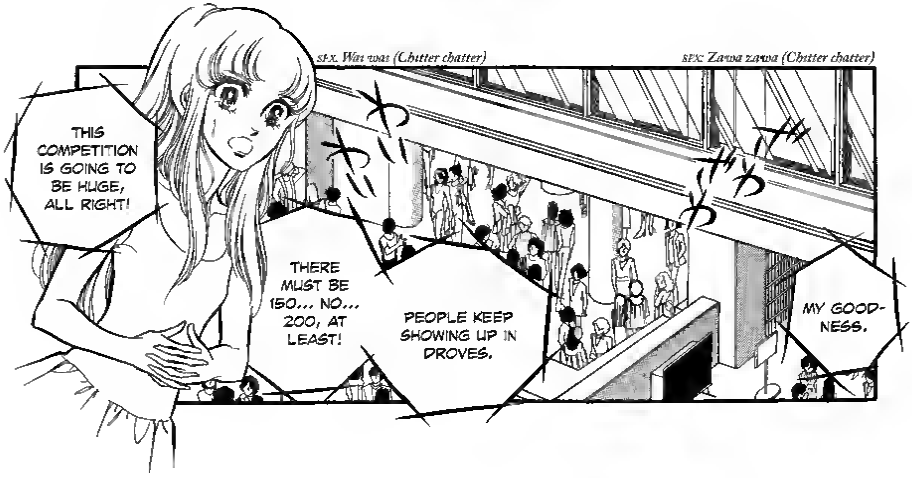
SFX: Gacha (Click)
ガチャ
SFX: Katsun (Step)
SORRY! I'M SO SORRY FOR COMING IN WITHOUT PERMISSION.
DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT.
GEE... YOU'RE HERE EARLY.
AGGH! YOU SCARED ME!
I CAME EARLY, TOO, HOPING TO REHEARSE A BIT.
UH...
YOU'RE GOOD... ARE YOU IN THE ADVANCED CLASS AT YOUR BALLET SCHOOL?

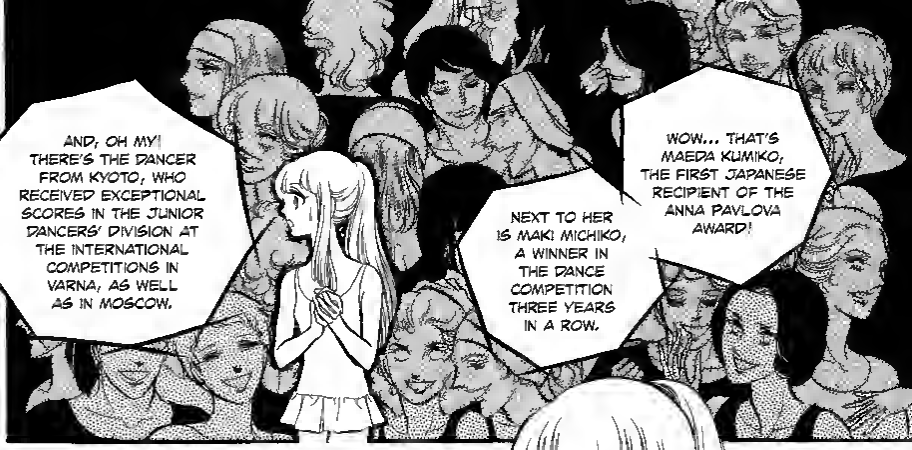

OH?
I'M NOT VERY GOOD. I HAVE NO IDEA WHY I'M EVEN IN THIS COMPETITION!
OH, NO! ABSOLUTELY NOT!


YOU WERE SO WONDERFUL! IT WAS SO TOUCHING, IT MADE ME CRY!
I SAW YOU PERFORM!

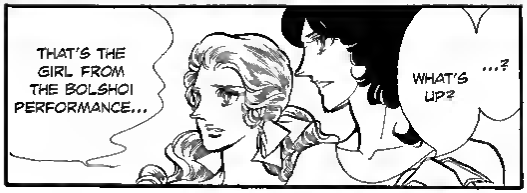

Erk!
OH, MY GOSH!
I KNEW YOU LOOKED FAMILIAR! YOU'RE KUSAKABE-SAN, THE ONE WHO PLACED FIRST IN THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION AWARD AT THE NATIONAL DANCE COMPETITION!

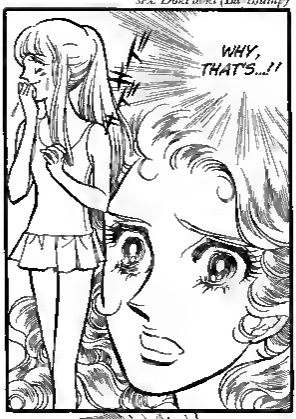

THANKS.

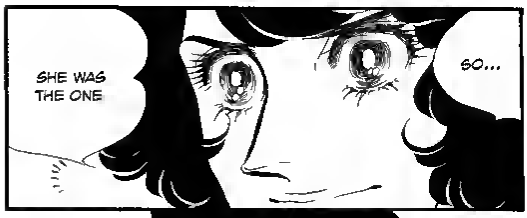

SFX: Wai waa (Chitter chatter)
SFX: Zawa zawa (Chitter chatter)
THIS COMPETITION IS GOING TO BE HUGE, ALL RIGHT!
THERE MUST BE 150... NO... 200, AT LEAST!
PEOPLE KEEP SHOWING UP IN DROVES.
MY GOODNESS.


AND, OH MY! THERE'S THE DANCER FROM KYOTO, WHO RECEIVED EXCEPTIONAL SCORES IN THE JUNIOR DANCERS' DIVISION AT THE INTERNATIONAL COMPETITIONS IN VARNA, AS WELL AS IN MOSCOW.
NEXT TO HER IS MAKI MICHIKO, A WINNER IN THE DANCE COMPETITION THREE YEARS IN A ROW.
WOW... THAT'S MAEDA KUMIKO, THE FIRST JAPANESE RECIPIENT OF THE ANNA PAVLOVA AWARD!

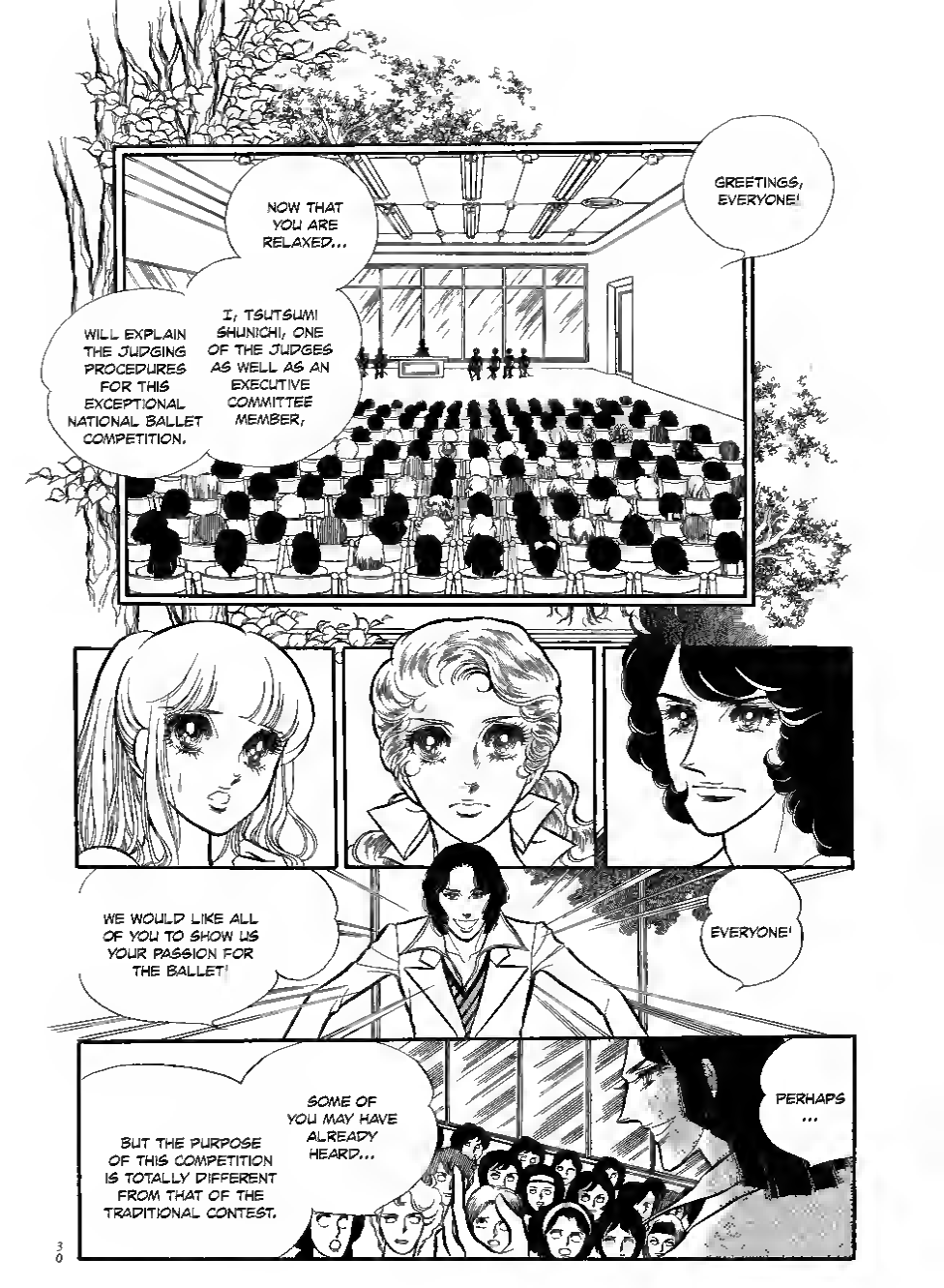
SFX. Doki doki (Ba-thump)





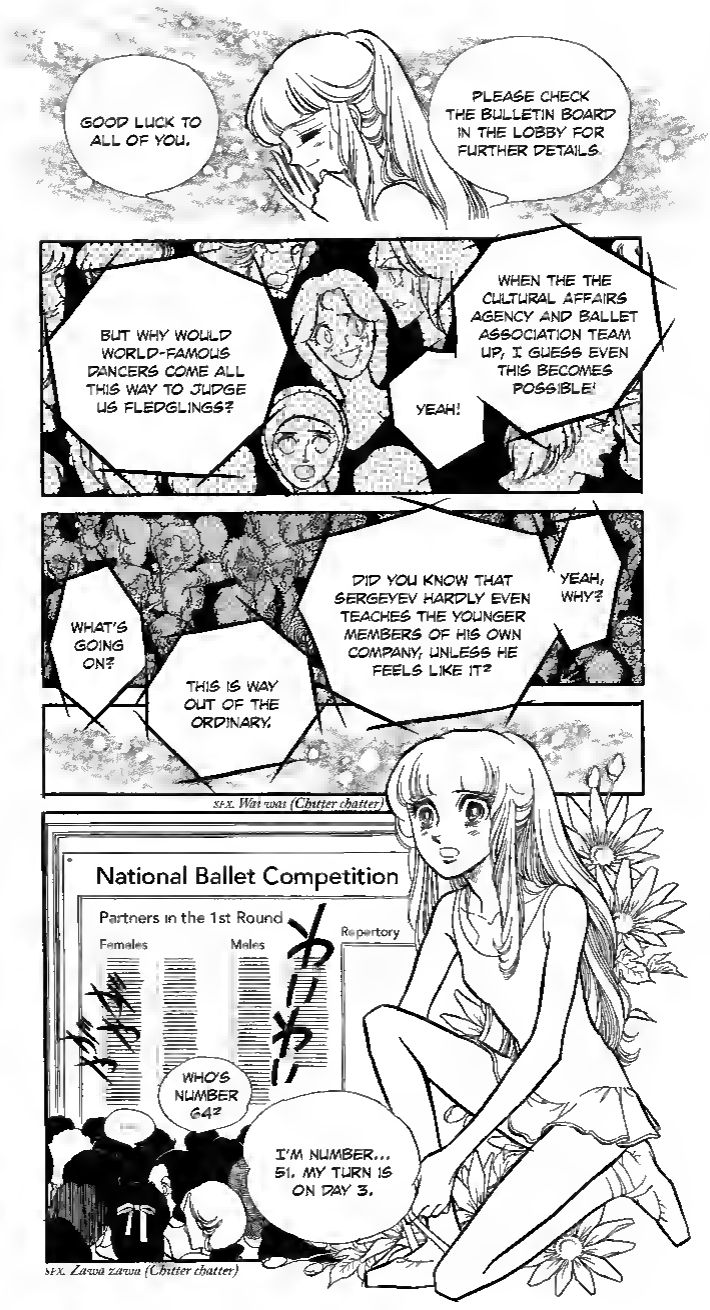


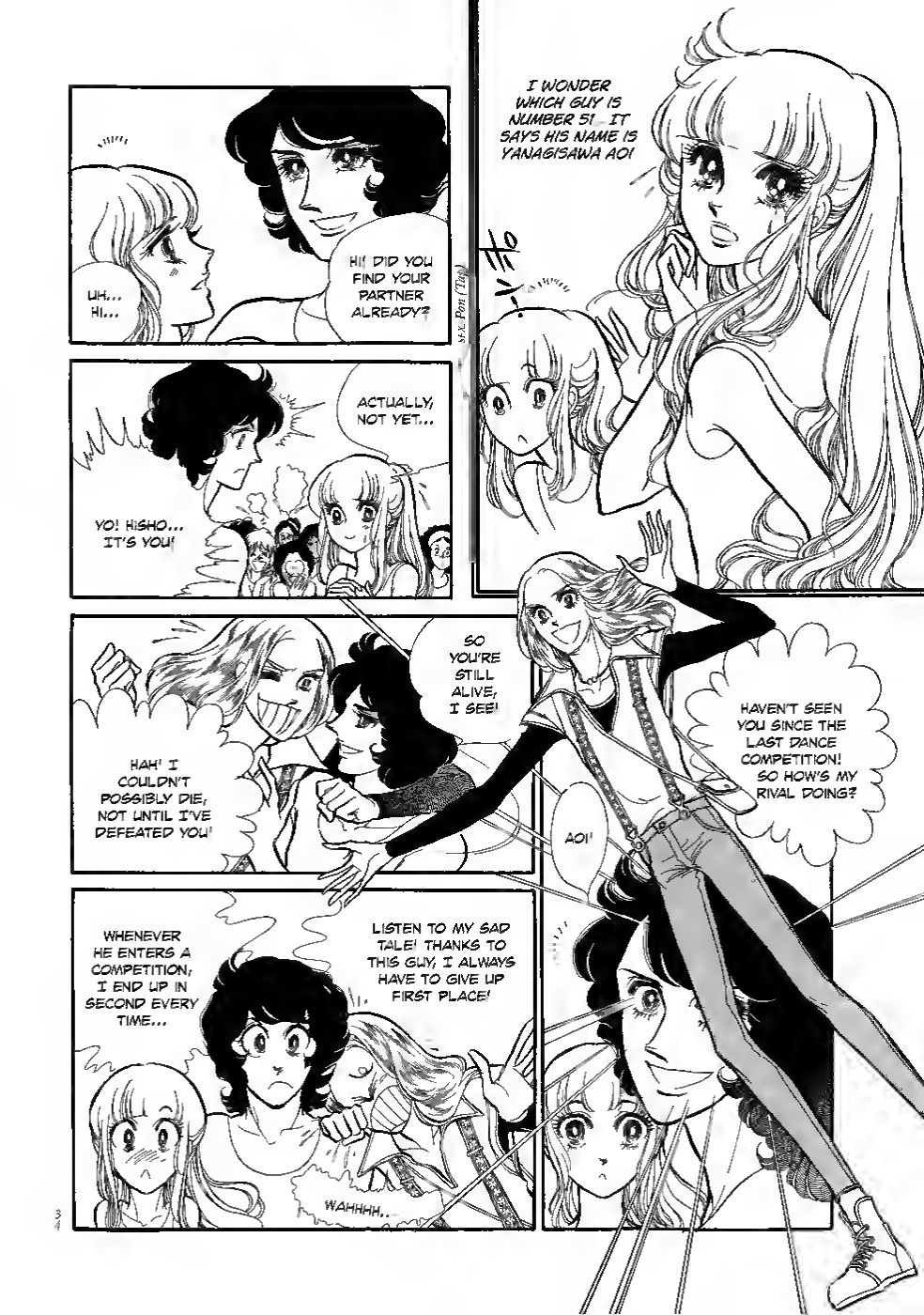
PLEASE MEET IN REHEARSAL ROOM A.
BEFORE REHEARSALS BEGIN, THERE WILL BE AN ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE JAPAN BALLET ASSOCIATION.
ATTENTION ALL PARTICIPANTS IN THE NATIONAL BALLET COMPETITION SPONSORED BY THE AGENCY FOR CULTURAL AFFAIRS AND THE JAPAN BALLET ASSOCIATION.
LOOK! IN THE CENTER CHAIR!
HEY, THAT'S...
st-x. Wa wa wa (Chitter chatter)
st-x. Zawa zawa (Chitter chatter)
WHAT'S HE DOING HERE?
AN ANNOUNCE-MENT?
WHAT?
ALEXEI SERGEYEV!!


GREETINGS, EVERYONE!
NOW THAT YOU ARE RELAXED...
I, TSUTSUMI SHUNICHI, ONE OF THE JUDGES AS WELL AS AN EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBER,
WILL EXPLAIN THE JUDGING PROCEDURES FOR THIS EXCEPTIONAL NATIONAL BALLET COMPETITION.
EVERYONE!
WE WOULD LIKE ALL OF YOU TO SHOW US YOUR PASSION FOR THE BALLET!
PERHAPS ...
SOME OF YOU MAY HAVE ALREADY HEARD...
BUT THE PURPOSE OF THIS COMPETITION IS TOTALLY DIFFERENT FROM THAT OF THE TRADITIONAL CONTEST.

HOW MANY OF YOU CAN REMEMBER THE WORDS OF MARGOT FONTEYN WHEN SHE VISITED JAPAN?
SHE SAID, "JAPAN WILL MOST LIKELY BECOME THE FOCAL POINT OF BALLET IN THE WORLD, AFTER FRANCE AND THE SOVIET UNION."
WILL HER PREDICTION COME TRUE OR NOT? EITHER WAY, BALLET IN JAPAN MUST AIM FOR THE WORLD ARENA.
AND ITS FUTURE RESTS WHOLLY ON YOUR SHOULDERS. SO IN THIS COMPETITION, WE'LL NOT ONLY BE JUDGING THE TECHNICAL SKILLS YOU ALREADY POSSESS...
BUT ALSO YOUR TRUE POTENTIAL!
AS FOR THE JUDGES, THERE WILL BE EIGHT MEMBERS FROM THE JAPAN BALLET ASSOCIATION, INCLUDING CHAIRPERSON HATTORI CHIEKO.
SIX OTHER JUDGES HAVE ARRIVED IN JAPAN; ALL WORLD-RENOWNED DANCERS AND CHOREOGRAPHERS.
THEIR NAMES WILL BE ANNOUNCED AT THE OPENING CEREMONY TWO WEEKS FROM TODAY.
わあっ
AMAZING!
THE FOREIGN JUDGES WILL INCLUDE MR. ALEXEI SERGEYEV, SOLOIST DANCER OF THE BOLSHOI BALLET.

THE COMPETITION WILL BE COMPRISED OF THREE ELIMINATION ROUNDS.
THE FORMAT WILL BE SIMILAR TO THE TOKYO INTERNATIONAL BALLET COMPETITION.
ALEXEI SERGEYEV?
HOWEVER, OF THE 182 PARTICIPANTS, WE DON'T HAVE AN EQUAL NUMBER OF MALES AND FEMALES, SO WE SHALL BE CHOOSING YOUR PARTNERS FOR YOU FOR THE PAS DE DEUX IN THE FIRST ROUND.
WILL BE RECEIVING PRIVATE LESSONS FOR SIX MONTHS...
FROM MR. ALEXEI SERGEYEV AND OUR OTHER ILLUSTRIOUS JUDGES.
THE FIRST ROUND WILL TAKE PLACE OVER FIVE DAYS. THE SECOND ROUND, THREE DAYS. AND THE THIRD ROUND, TWO DAYS, FOR A TOTAL OF TEN COMPETITION DAYS.
ONCE THE FINAL JUDGING HAS BEEN COMPLETED, THE HIGHEST-SCORING PARTICIPANT...
うあぁっ
SFX: Waah!
SOME JAPANESE BALLET COMPANIES HAVE INVITED FOREIGN SOLOISTS TO TEACH HERE BEFORE.
THAT'S INCREDIBLE!
UNBELIEVABLE!
BUT TO STUDENTS LIKE US? AND THOSE STUDENTS WILL BE ALLOWED TO TAKE LESSONS FROM MANY OF THE INSTRUCTORS AT ONCE?
PRIVATE LESSONS FROM SERGEYEV AND THE OTHERS?
WHAT THE HECK IS GOING ON?


GOOD LUCK TO ALL OF YOU.
PLEASE CHECK THE BULLETIN BOARD IN THE LOBBY FOR FURTHER DETAILS.
BUT WHY WOULD WORLD-FAMOUS DANCERS COME ALL THIS WAY TO JUDGE US FLEDGLINGS?
YEAH!
WHEN THE THE CULTURAL AFFAIRS AGENCY AND BALLET ASSOCIATION TEAM UP, I GUESS EVEN THIS BECOMES POSSIBLE!
WHAT'S GOING ON?
THIS IS WAY OUT OF THE ORDINARY.
DID YOU KNOW THAT SERGEYEV HARDLY EVEN TEACHES THE YOUNGER MEMBERS OF HIS OWN COMPANY, UNLESS HE FEELS LIKE IT?
YEAH, WHY?
SFX. Wat was (Chitter chatter)
National Ballet Competition
Partners in the 1st Round
Females
Males
Repertory
WHO'S NUMBER 64?
I'M NUMBER... 51. MY TURN IS ON DAY 3.
SFX. Zawa zawa (Chitter chatter)


I WONDER WHICH GUY IS NUMBER 51... IT SAYS HIS NAME IS YANAGISAWA AOI
HI! DID YOU FIND YOUR PARTNER ALREADY?
UH... HI...
ACTUALLY, NOT YET...
YO! HISHO... IT'S YOU!
SO YOU'RE STILL ALIVE, I SEE!
HAVEN'T SEEN YOU SINCE THE LAST DANCE COMPETITION! SO HOW'S MY RIVAL DOING?
HAH! I COULDN'T POSSIBLY DIE; NOT UNTIL I'VE DEFEATED YOU!
AOI!
LISTEN TO MY SAD TALE! THANKS TO THIS GUY, I ALWAYS HAVE TO GIVE UP FIRST PLACE!
WHENEVER HE ENTERS A COMPETITION, I END UP IN SECOND EVERY TIME...
WAHHHH...

WAIT A MINUTE... WHERE HAVE I HEARD THE NAME AOI BEFORE?
WOW.. THAT GUY IS SO INTENSE
HEY, CUT IT OUT!
HAHA... YOU KNOW I'M JUST KIDDING!!
BY THE WAY...
DID YOU NOTICE IT?
THE INCREDIBLE LINE-UP... INCLUDING OUR JUDGES?
HELLO, THERE! IF IT ISN'T PRINCESS SAYOKO! BOY, ARE YOU A SIGHT FOR SORE EYES!
YOU HAVEN'T CHANGED A BIT, AOI.
SOMETHING MUST BE UP
HEY!
I'D HEARD THAT WE'D BE ALLOWED TO TAKE LESSONS FROM FIRST-RATE DANCERS FROM ABROAD.
I HEARD THAT, TOO, BACK AT MY SCHOOL.
HEY!
OTHERWISE, THEY WOULDN'T GO TO THE TROUBLE OF INVITING ALL THESE JUDGES FROM OVERSEAS AND PROVIDING PRIVATE LESSONS!
YEAH...
BUT I HAD NO IDEA IT WOULD BE ALEXEI SERGEYEV!
AND THE OTHER JUDGES SHOULD BE MAGNIFICENT, TOO!

WOW! I CAN'T BELIEVE I'M STANDING SO CLOSE... I SAW YOU IN THE BLUE BIRD! AND YOUR PHOTOS IN THE BULLETIN!
YOU'RE KYOGOKU SAYOKO-SAN, AREN'T YOU!?
YES?
OH... IT'S HER..
OH, MY!
YOUR PHOTOS DON'T DO YOUR BEAUTY JUSTICE!
I'M IN AWE!
BUT ACTUALLY, WE'VE MET BEFORE
THANKS
NEVER MIND, AOI! DID YOU MEET WITH YOUR PARTNER ALREADY?
I WANNA KNOW, TOO!
HEY! WHAT HAPPENED?
THE PAS DE DEUX LESSONS ARE ALREADY STARTING TOMORROW, YOU KNOW!
Augh
OH...
THAT TIME...
BY THE BACKSTAGE ENTRANCE AT THE BOLSHOI PERFORMANCE.
...

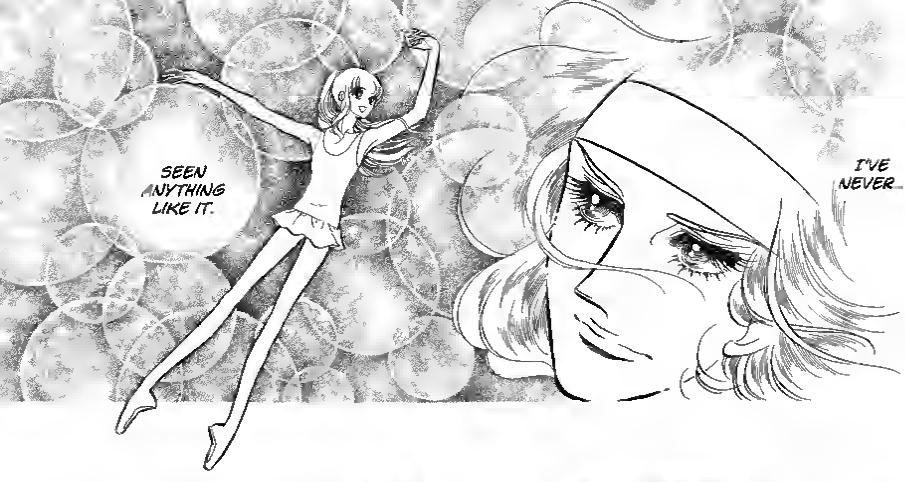
I KNOW I'M GOING TO END UP WITH ANOTHER ABYSMAL PARTNER, SO WHY EVEN BOTHER?
I'M CURSED, I TELL YOU.
I JUST WISH THAT, ONCE IN A WHILE, THEY'D LET ME PARTNER WITH SOMEONE AS GOOD AS PRINCESS SAYOKO... YOU KNOW?
HMPH ...
YOU TWO ARE GOING TO END UP PARTNERS AGAIN, ANYWAY.
BECAUSE THE ASSOCIATION KNOWS THAT YOU ALWAYS PAIR UP TOGETHER.
SO WHAT NUMBER ARE YOU?
UH... SI. SOME GAL NAMED HIJIRI MASUMI. NEVER HEARD OF HER, RIGHT?
YAA!
HMM?
UMM...
SFX: Eh!? (Huh!?)
HAHAHA... SO IT'S YOU!
Sorry
UH... NO... I'M SORRY!
WHAT!? YOU!?

PHEW... HOW FORTUNATE...
THAT I'M BEING ALLOWED TO STUDY WITH SUCH TALENTED PEOPLE!
I'LL DO MY BEST TO LEARN FROM MY EXCELLENT ROLE MODELS...
AND TRY NOT TO FEEL TOO INFERIOR!
YEH!
MASUMI-CHAN, WE'RE DOING THE PAS DE DEUX FROM ACT III OF RAYMONDA. SHALL WE START PRACTICING?
SURE!

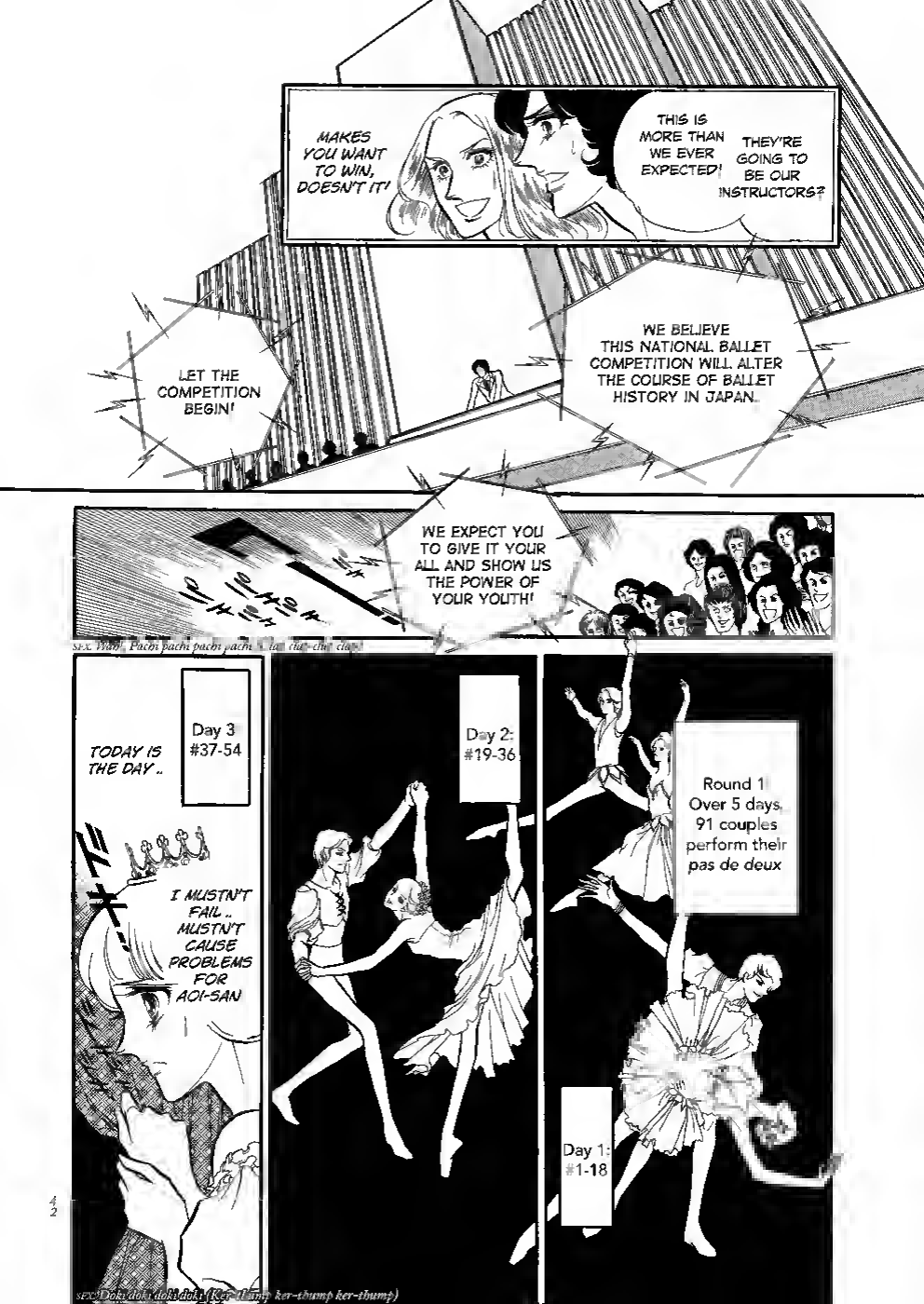
WOW!
THIS GIRL !
OOH!
SFX: Gura (Stumble)
HOLD IT RIGHT THERE.
IF YOU DO MANY IN A ROW, YOU'LL WOBBLE WHEN YOU LAND; DUE TO THE EXTRA FORCE IN YOUR ANKLE. FURTHER-MORE, YOUR LEAPS WILL BE NARROW.
YOUR WEIGHT IS TOO FAR FORWARD IN THE GRAND JETÉ.

Raymonda is a famous Russian ballet first performed at the Mariinsky Theatre in St. Petersburg, Russia in 1898. Raymonda is betrothed to Jean de Brienne, but a Saracen knight, Abderakhman, also falls in love with her. Raymonda's fiancé rescues her from abduction by the knight. The *pas de deux* from their wedding in Act III is often performed in competitions.

THEN IT WOULD BE ALL OVER!
OTHERWISE, YOU WON'T ACHIEVE THE APPEARANCE OF LIGHTNESS, AND YOU MIGHT EVEN FALL ON STAGE.
THAT'S IT.
WHEN YOU'RE GAINING MOMENTUM USING THE PAS GLISSADE, TRY PUTTING ALL YOUR WEIGHT ON YOUR LEFT LEG, AND KEEP YOUR HEEL FIRMLY ON THE FLOOR TO ACCUMULATE FORCE.
THEN MOVE ON TO THE VARIATION FROM RAYMONDA.
LET'S TRY THAT AGAIN...
I JUST HOPE THAT INSTABILITY DOESN'T SURFACE DURING THE COMPETITION
WHAT IS THAT SUPPOSED TO MEAN?
SOMETHING WRONG?
WELL... IT'S STRANGE.
DON'T KNOW...
HMM...
HOW IS SHE?
HOW... DO I EXPLAIN?
INCREDIBLY LIGHT!
SHE'S JUST...
BUT IT'S NOT ALWAYS THERE WHEN SHE'S GAINING FORCE OR MOMENTUM. LIKE BEFORE A JETÉ THE OPPOSITE OFTEN HAPPENS
SHE HAS AN INNATE LIGHTNESS
BEFORE MY ARM EVEN SUPPORTS HER... IT'S AS IF SHE'S ALREADY BEING SUPPORTED BY THE AIR...


SEEN ANYTHING LIKE IT.
I'VE NEVER...

as well as from the Paris Opera Ballet
dancers from the Royal Ballet,
G. Ulanova,
A. Messerer,
The Judges: Masters of the Bolshoi Ballet
THERE WILL BE 15 JUDGES, INCLUDING THE JAPANESE JUDGES.
わあっ
SFX: Oob!
SFX: Waah!


THEY'RE GOING TO BE OUR INSTRUCTORS?
THIS IS MORE THAN WE EVER EXPECTED!
MAKES YOU WANT TO WIN, DOESN'T IT!
WE BELIEVE THIS NATIONAL BALLET COMPETITION WILL ALTER THE COURSE OF BALLET HISTORY IN JAPAN.
LET THE COMPETITION BEGIN!
WE EXPECT YOU TO GIVE IT YOUR ALL AND SHOW US THE POWER OF YOUR YOUTH!
SFX: Wah! Pacon pacon pacon pacon ... ta- cha- cha- cha
Round 1 Over 5 days, 91 couples perform their pas de deux
Day 1: #1-18
Day 2: #19-36
Day 3 #37-54
TODAY IS THE DAY..
I MUSTN'T FAIL.. MUSTN'T CAUSE PROBLEMS FOR AOI-SAN
SFX: Doki doki (doki doki) (Ker-thump ker-thump ker-thump)

WOW.. EVERYONE IS SO BEAUTIFUL..
THEY'RE SO GOOD
HOW I WISH
IF ONLY I COULD WIN.. AND TAKE LESSONS, TOO..
SOB
THERE'S NO WAY THEY'RE ALL TOO GOOD
AN IMPOSSIBLE DREAM...
THE KUSAKABE TEAM IS ON NOW!
KUSAKABE-SAN'S TEAM IS NEXT AT NUMBER 47... AND AFTER THREE MORE COUPLES... WE'RE UP!
THEY'RE NUMBER 46
SFX Gagu (Shock)
SFX Doki doki doki doki (Ker-thump ker thump)
SFX Pachi pachi pachi (Clap clap clap)
SFX Doki doki doki doki (Ker-thump ker thump)

SO PERFECT TOGETHER...
HOW GORGEOUS!
I'M SO NERVOUS... I COULD NEVER DANCE LIKE THEM!
OH, NO!
MY LEGS...

SWAN

ARIYOSHI KYOKO

MARIS
SCANNER

MAYA PERRY (CMX)
TRANSLATOR

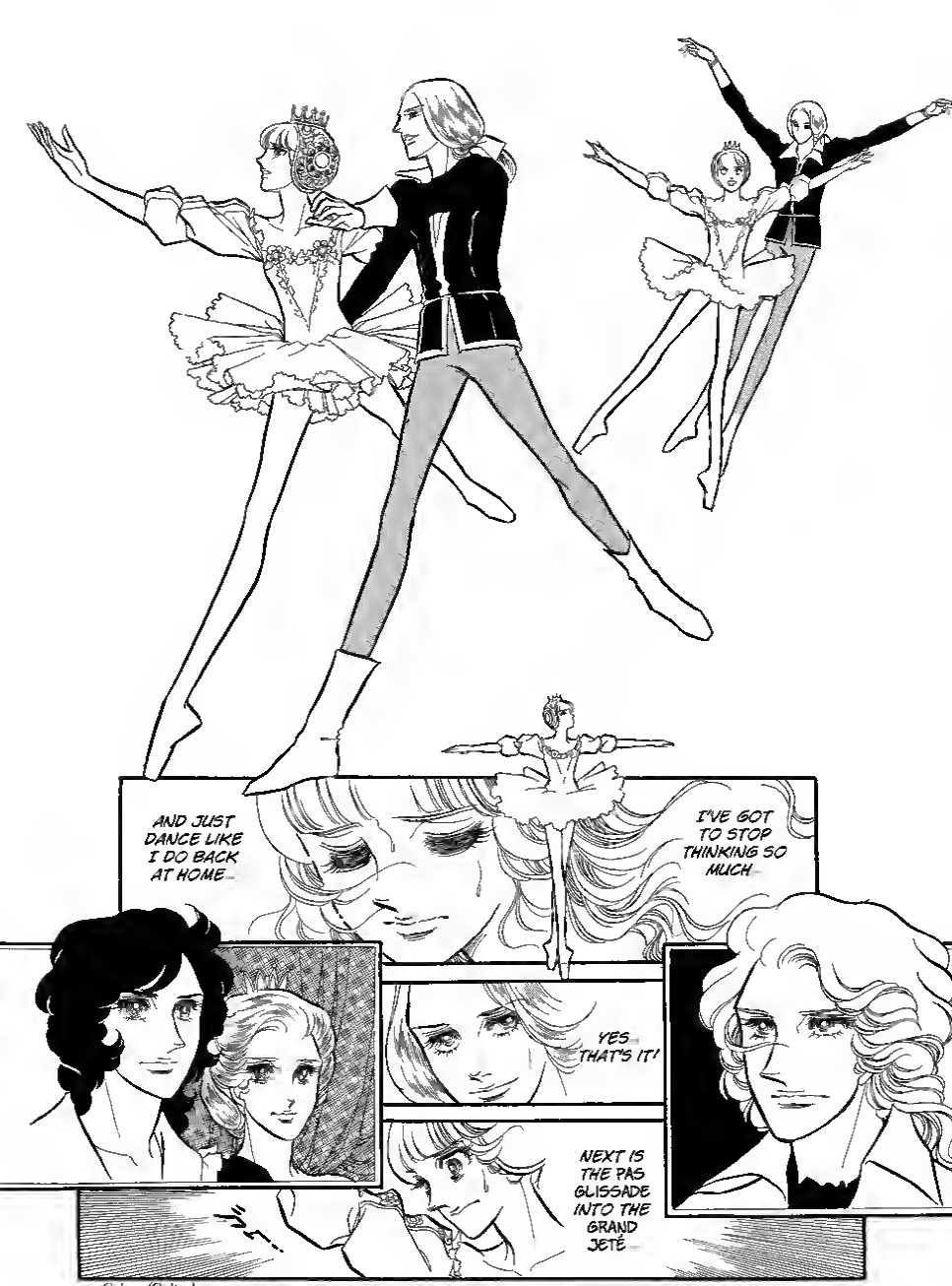
MARIS
PROOFREADER

MARIS
EDITOR

MARIS
QUALITY CONTROL

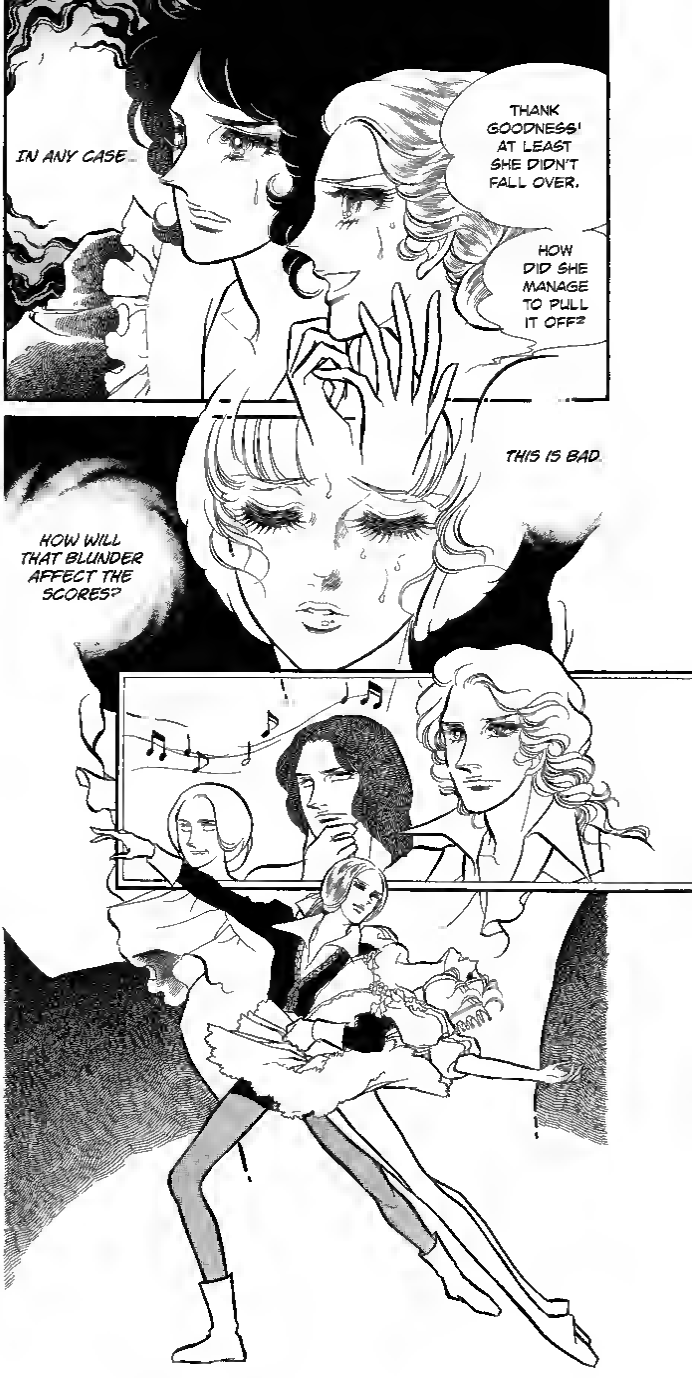
SHOUJO MANGA MANIAC
WWW.SHOUJO-MANGA.ORG

I DON'T EVEN KNOW WHY I GOT AN INVITATION IN THE FIRST PLACE!
NO! I SHOULDN'T EVEN BE HERE!
WHAT IF I... FAIL AGAIN LIKE IN REHEARSAL?
THE BEST DANCERS IN JAPAN ARE HERE!
SFX: Biku (Flinch)
MASUMI-CHAN, WE'RE UP NEXT.
I'M SO SCARED!
NUMBER 51 HIJIRI MASUMI AND YANAGISAWA AOI
EVEN YOU, AOI-SAN!?
WE'RE ALL SCARED, EVEN ME.
YOU'LL BE FINE.
WOW!
SEE.
SFX: Pachi pachi pachi (Clap clap clap)
HERE WE GO!
RAYMONDA, ACT III
AND THE ONLY REMEDY IS TO GET OUT THERE AND DANCE!
MY HEART IS POUNDING, TOO!


AND JUST DANCE LIKE I DO BACK AT HOME...
I'VE GOT TO STOP THINKING SO MUCH...
YES... THAT'S IT!
NEXT IS THE PAS GLISSADE INTO THE GRAND JETÉ...
SFX: Goku... (Gulp...)

UH ..!
グラ
SFX: Gura (Stumble)
MY ANKLE!
OH, NO...!
SHE JUMPED WITHOUT REGAINING BALANCE FIRST!
THIS IS BAD!
SHE'LL FALL!

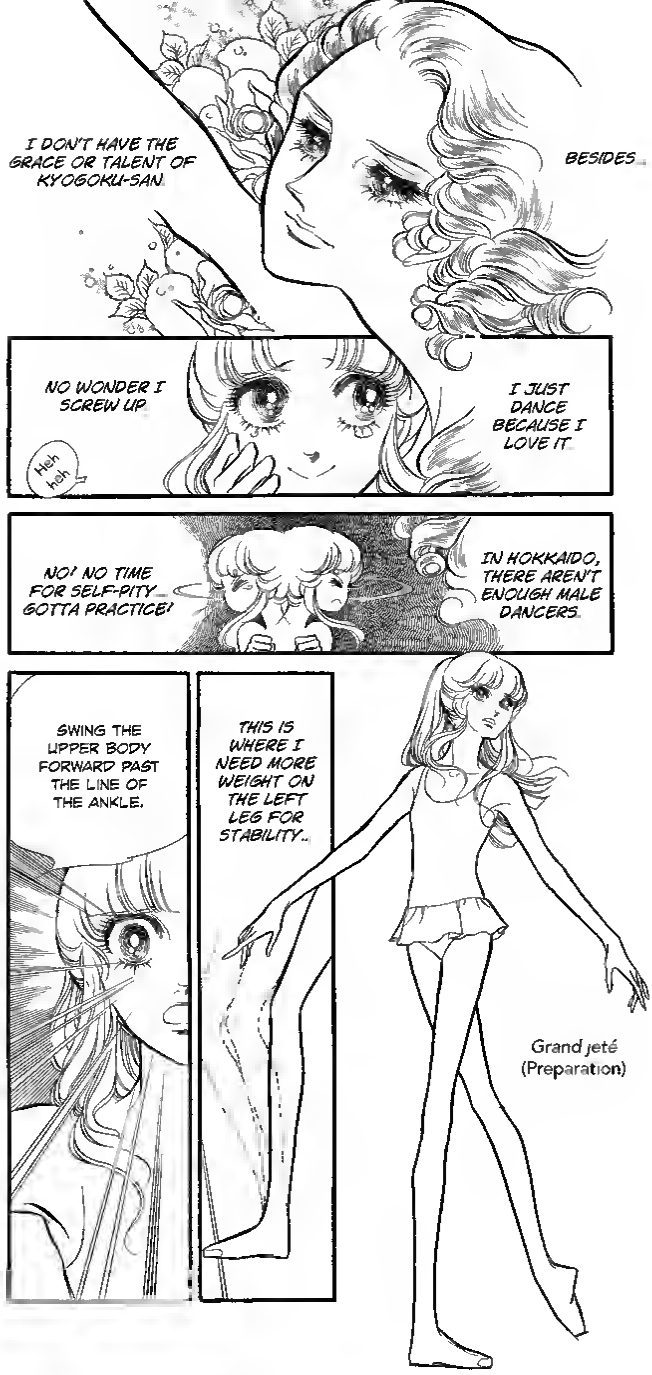
SFX. Kura kura kura (Wobble wobble wobble)

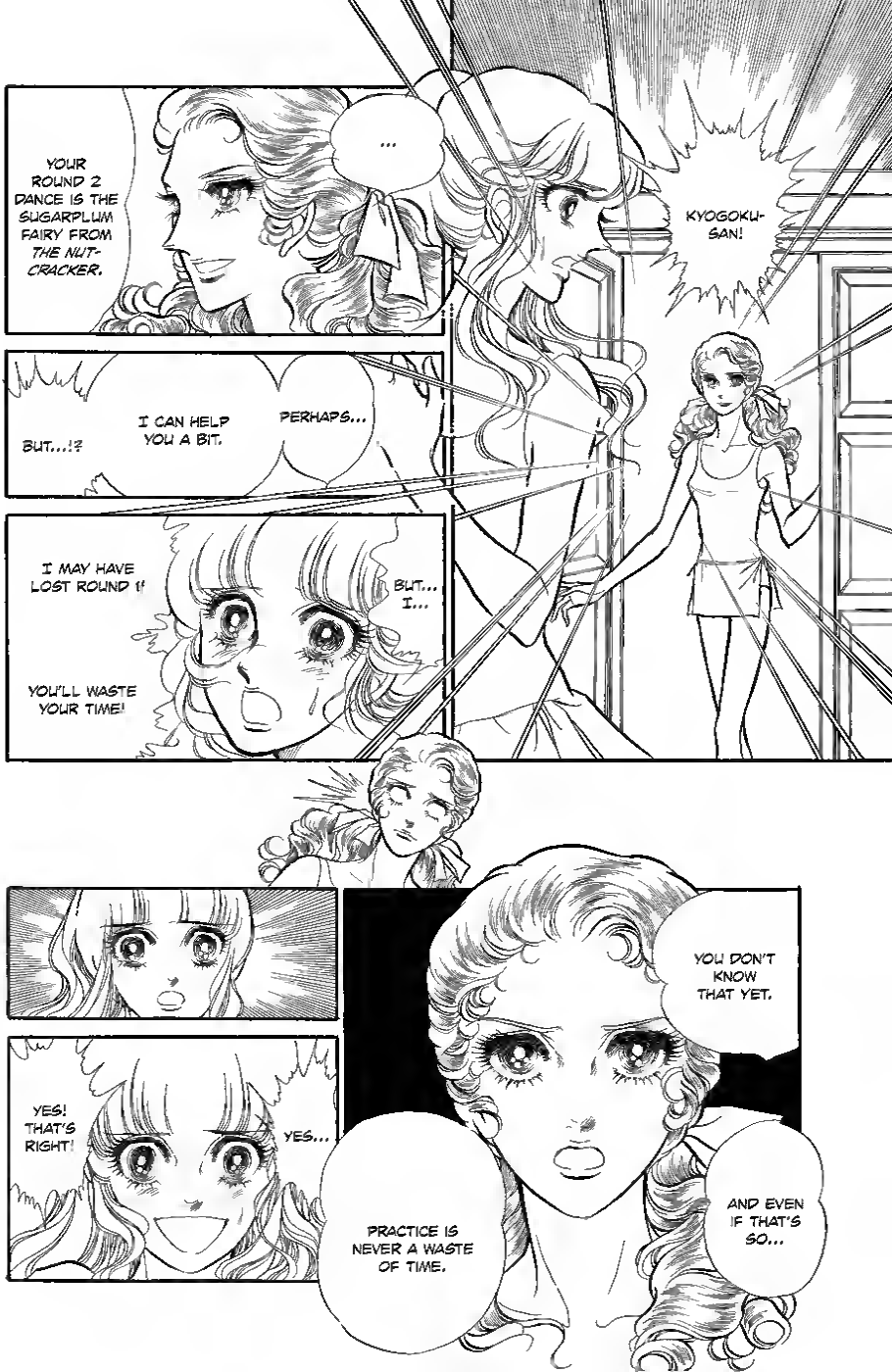

IN ANY CASE...
THANK GOODNESS! AT LEAST SHE DIDN'T FALL OVER.
HOW DID SHE MANAGE TO PULL IT OFF?
THIS IS BAD.
HOW WILL THAT BLUNDER AFFECT THE SCORES?

IT'S NOT OVER... YET.
HAVE TO... KEEP GOING... TO THE END.
SFX: Pachi pachi (Clap clap)
SOB
YOUR PRINCE AWAITS!
SOB
SFX: Biku (Flinch)
MASUMI-CHAN...
YOU REALLY HUNG IN THERE.
WAAHHH!!
WHAT THE...

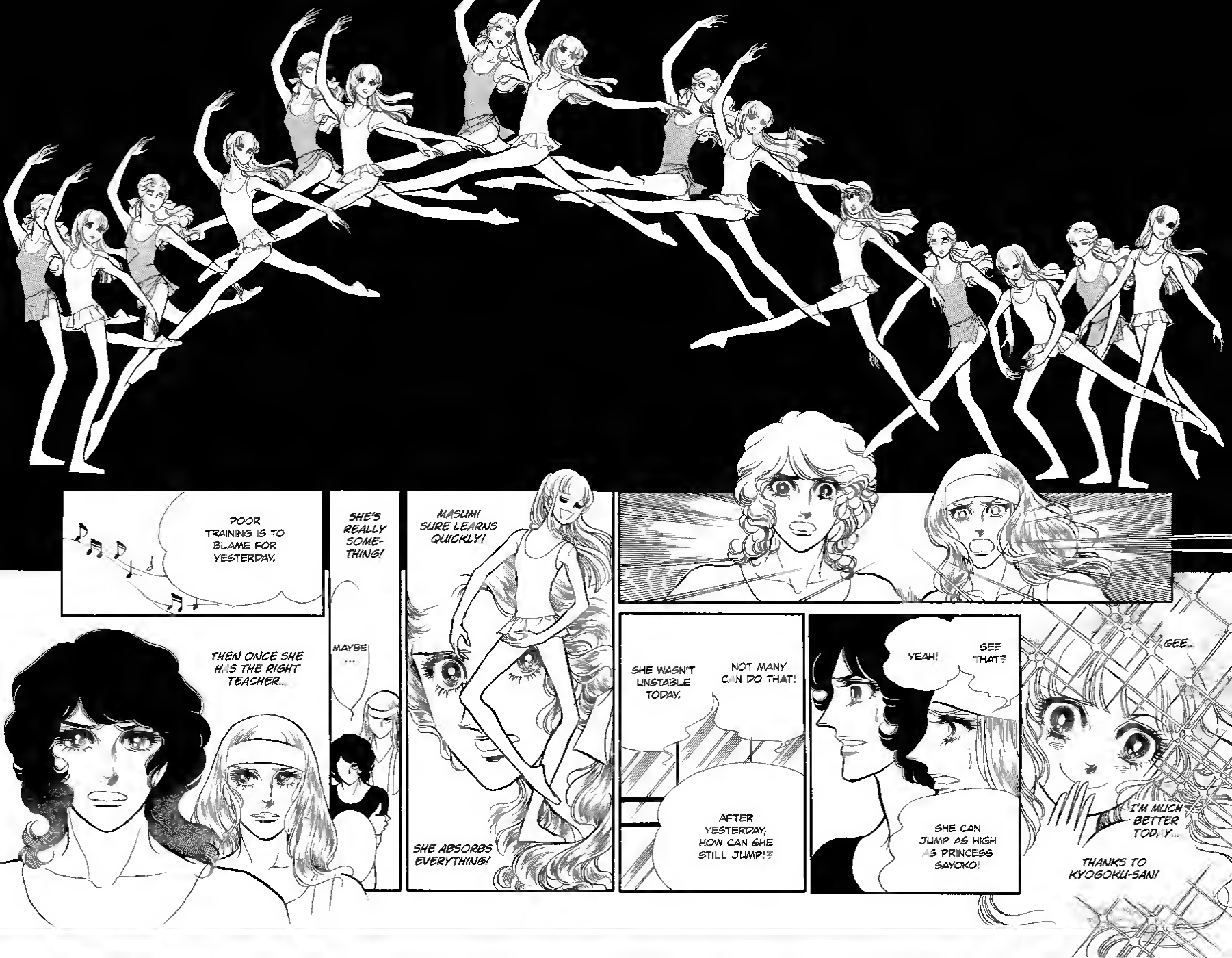
MY FIRST COMPETITION, AND I SCREWED IT UP!
I'M SO ASHAMED!
HEY... DON'T CRY.
YOU RECOVERED ALL RIGHT.
YOU DID FINE.
HOLD UP YOUR HEAD. EVERYBODY'S LOOKING.
TOO BAD!
DARN, SHE DIDN'T HUG ME!
YOU POOR GIRL.
BUT... BUT...
SOB
OH, DE. IR...
MM...

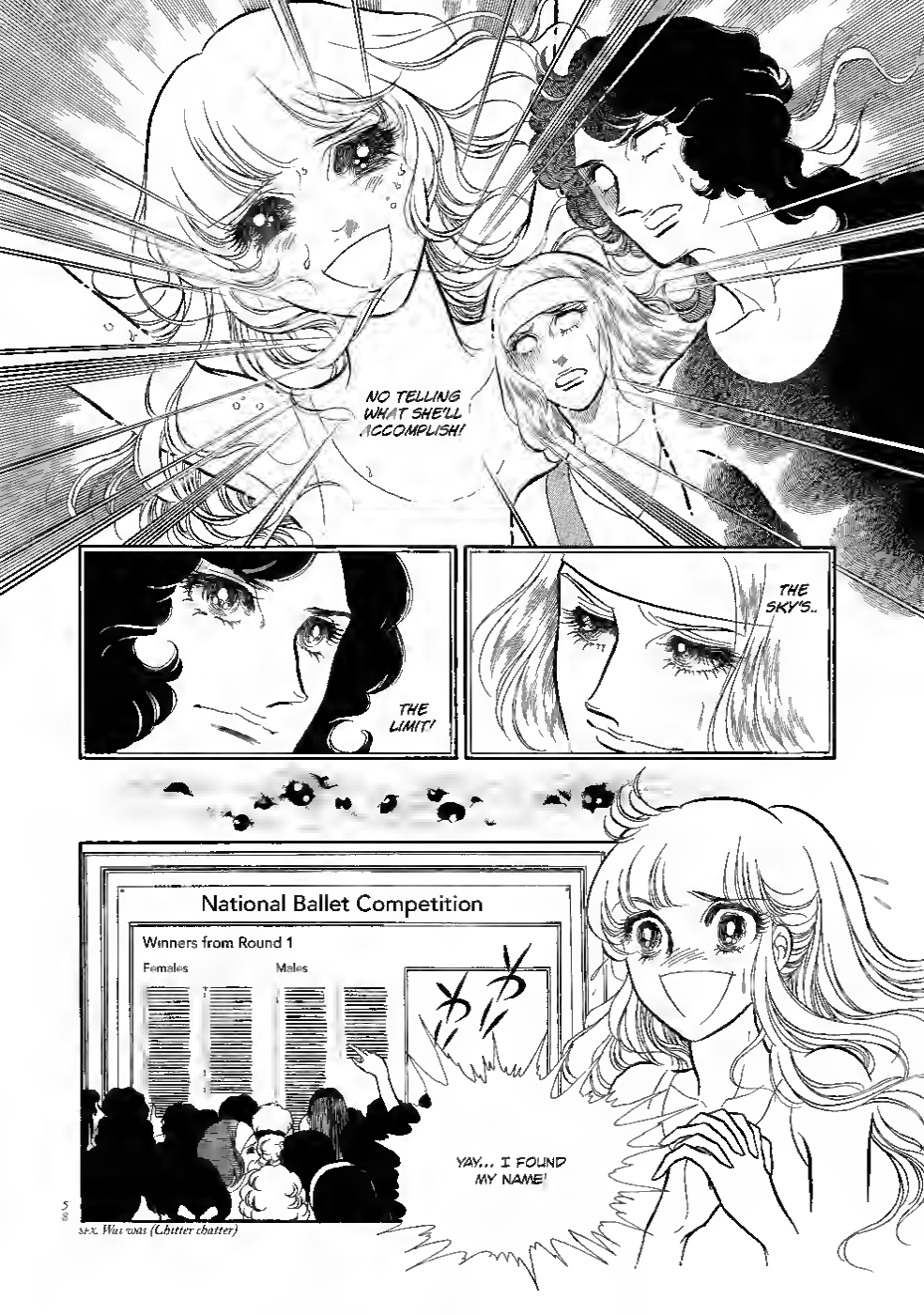
sex. Kacha (Click)
HOW SILLY OF ME...
PHEW...
PRACTICING FOR ROUND 2
I'VE PROBABLY FAILED ROUND 1


I DON'T HAVE THE GRACE OR TALENT OF KYOGOKU-SAN.
BESIDES...
NO WONDER I SCREW UP.
Heh heh
I JUST DANCE BECAUSE I LOVE IT.
NO! NO TIME FOR SELF-PITY... GOTTA PRACTICE!
IN HOKKAIDO, THERE AREN'T ENOUGH MALE DANCERS.
SWING THE UPPER BODY FORWARD PAST THE LINE OF THE ANKLE.
THIS IS WHERE I NEED MORE WEIGHT ON THE LEFT LEG FOR STABILITY..
Grand jeté
(Preparation)


YOUR ROUND 2 DANCE IS THE SUGARPLUM FAIRY FROM THE NUT-CRACKER.
...
KYOGOKU-SAN!
BUT...!?
I CAN HELP YOU A BIT.
PERHAPS...
I MAY HAVE LOST ROUND 1!
YOU'LL WASTE YOUR TIME!
BUT... I...
YES! THAT'S RIGHT!
YES...
PRACTICE IS NEVER A WASTE OF TIME.
AND EVEN IF THAT'S SO...
YOU DON'T KNOW THAT YET.

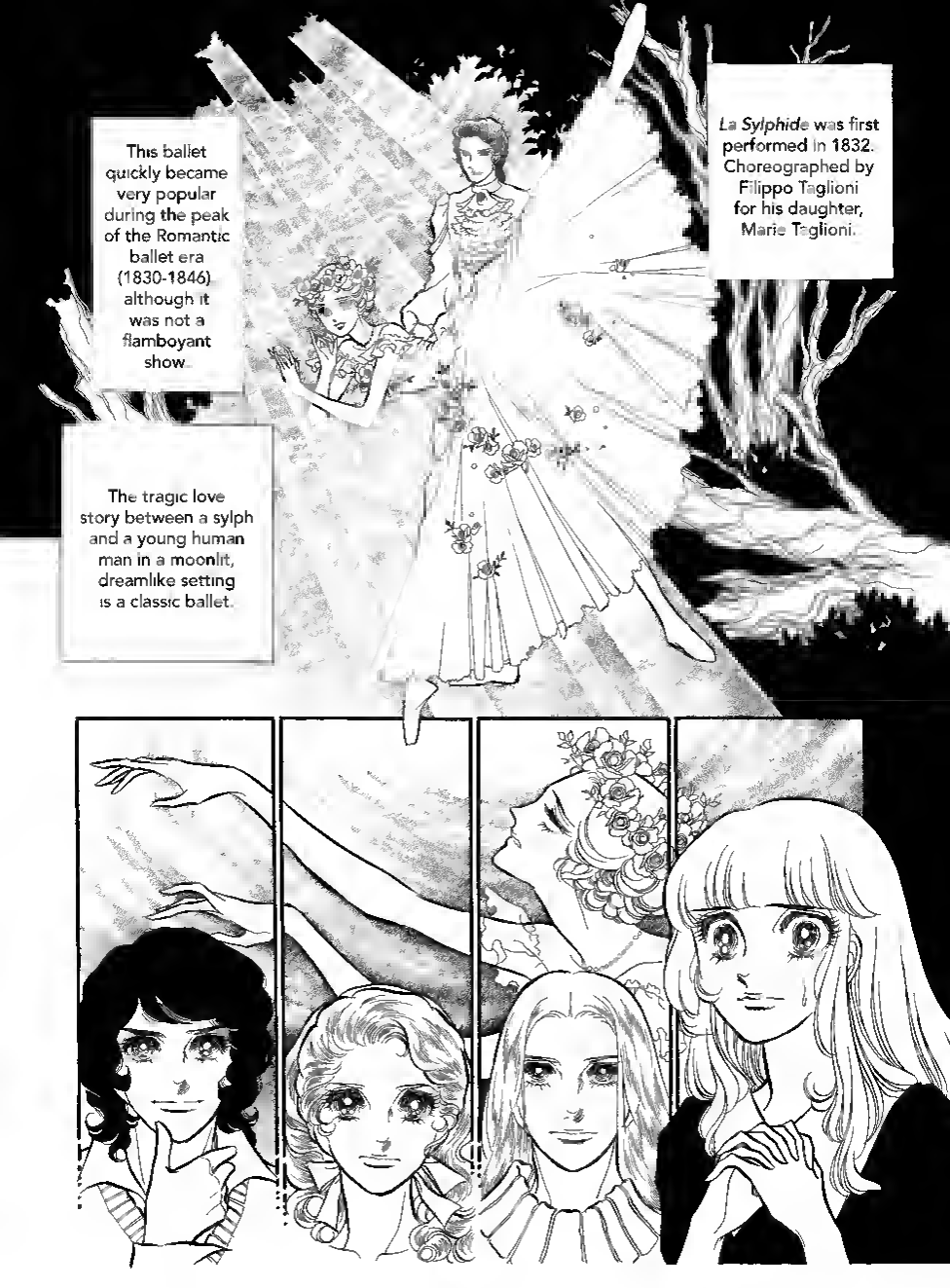
Left leg high to the back
THEY'RE WORKING HARD.
LOOKS GOOD.
SHE'S A FAST LEARNER.
Demi-plié lightly from toe to heel.
Stop in mid-air for attitudes to impress the audience.
Lean your upper body forward.
Go through first position. Strong grand battement forward.
YES .. OKAY!
READY?
LET'S DO IT AGAIN.
HUH...?


POOR TRAINING IS TO BLAME FOR YESTERDAY.
SHE'S REALLY SOME-THING!
MAYBE...
MASUMI SURE LEARNS QUICKLY!
SHE ABSORBS EVERYTHING!
THEN ONCE SHE HAS THE RIGHT TEACHER...
SHE WASN'T UNSTABLE TODAY.
NOT MANY CAN DO THAT!
AFTER YESTERDAY, HOW CAN SHE STILL JUMP!?
YEAH!
SEE THAT?
SHE CAN JUMP AS HIGH AS PRINCESS SAYOKO!
GEE...
I'M MUCH BETTER TODAY...
THANKS TO KYOGOKU-SAN!

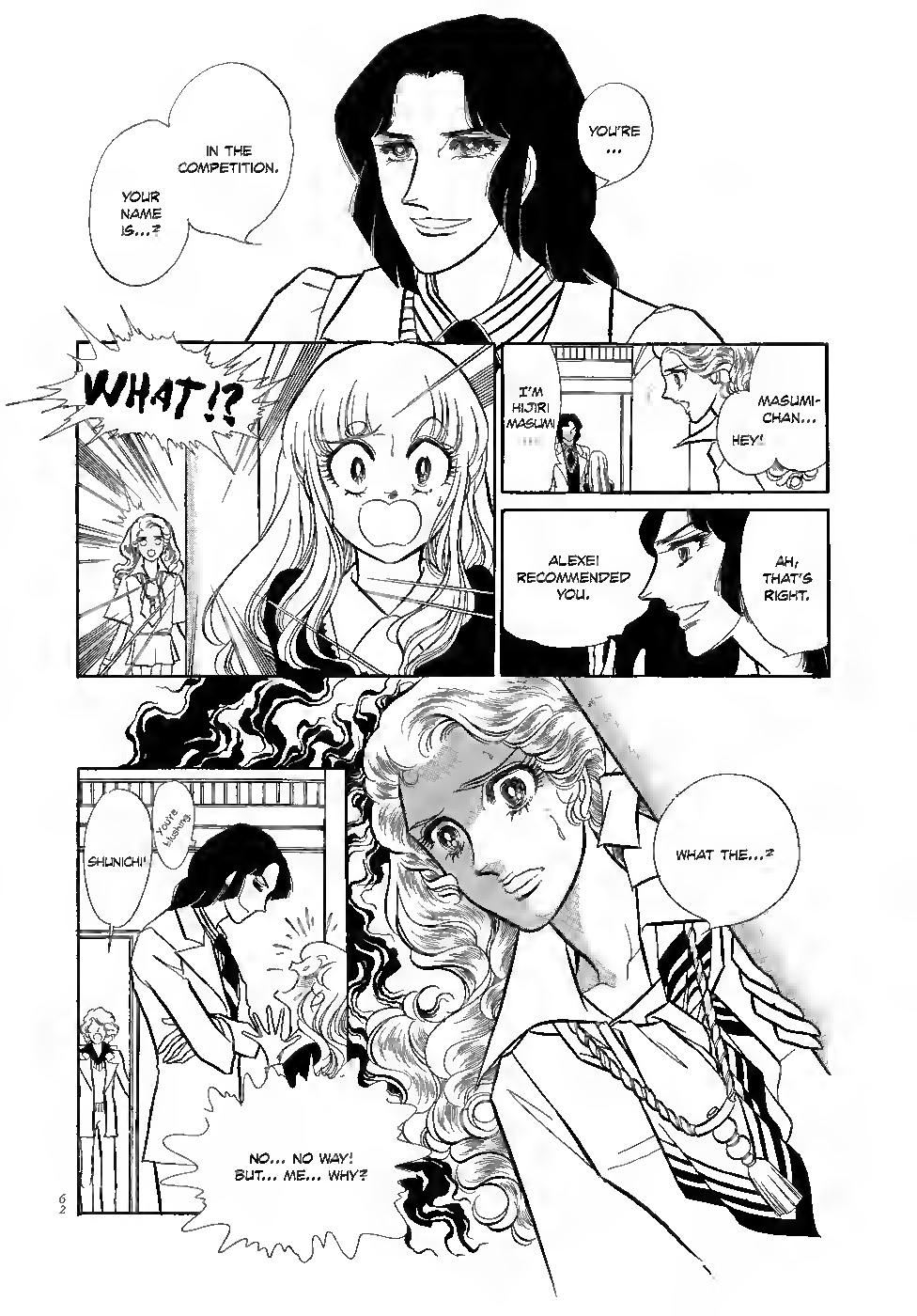


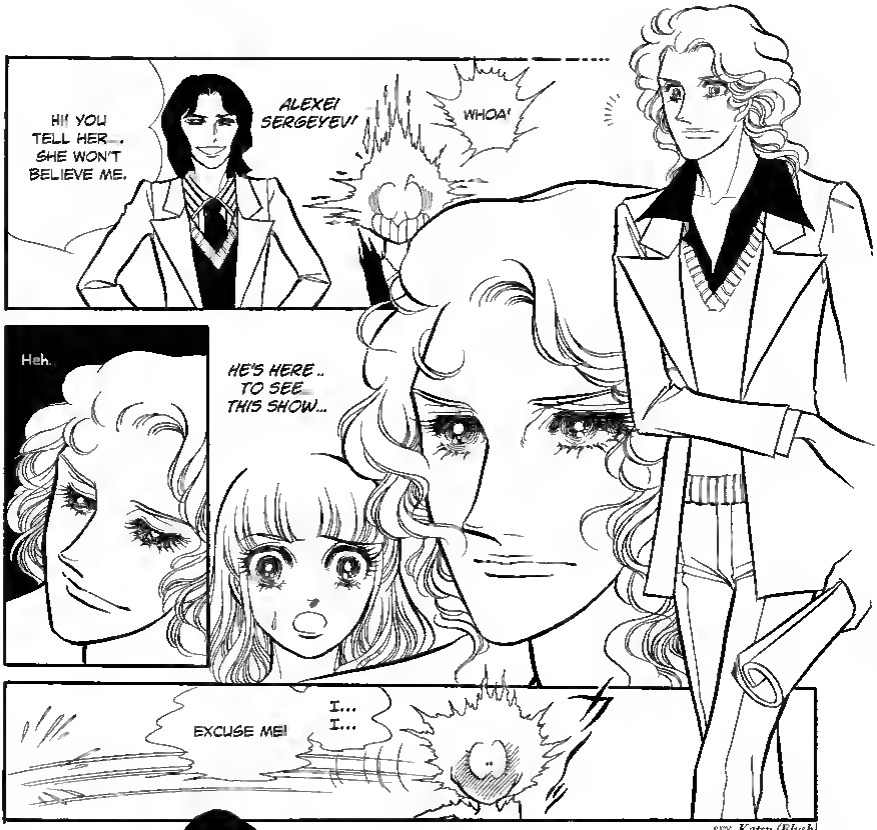
sfx. Wai wai (Chitter chatter)

HA...
OH...
SFX. Pa (Pop)
I CAN'T BELIEVE IT! I'M IN ROUND 2 WITH YOU ALL!
I'M SO HAPPY FOR YOU!
SFX. Don don don (Hop hop hop)
I REALLY WANT TO SEE IT!
YAY!
LET'S ALL GO SEE LA SYLPHIDE!
AFTER CLASS TODAY...
IT'S THE FIRST JAPANESE PERFORMANCE, EVER, PRODUCED BY THE MAKI ASAMI BALLET COMPANY!
YOU CAN LEARN FROM WATCHING EXCELLENT DANCERS!
ART IS A COMBINATION OF OBSERVATION AND EXPRESSION!
118 DANCERS ELIMINATED... YET I'M STILL HERE
WOW.. I JUST CAN'T BELIEVE IT!

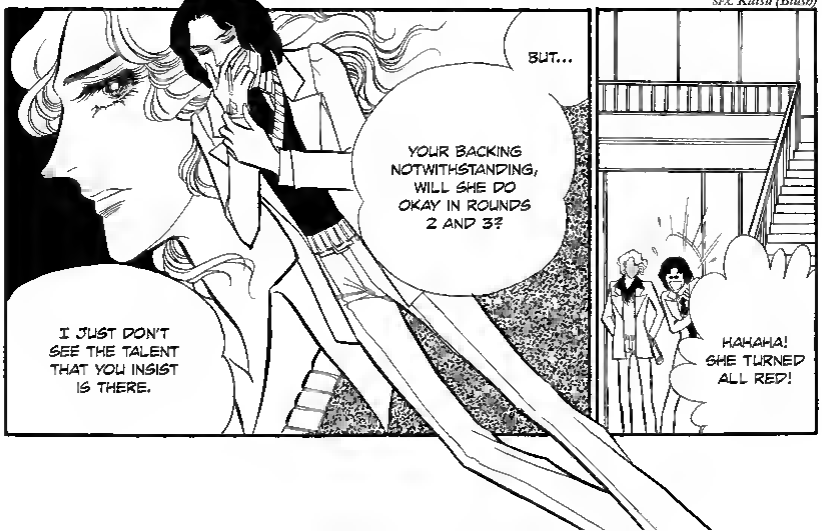

La Sylphide was first performed in 1832. Choreographed by Filippo Taglioni for his daughter, Marie Taglioni.
This ballet quickly became very popular during the peak of the Romantic ballet era (1830-1846), although it was not a flamboyant show.
The tragic love story between a sylph and a young human man in a moonlit, dreamlike setting is a classic ballet.

BEAUTIFUL. I HEARD OHARA NORIKO, THE LEAD SYLPH, IS INCREDIBLY DISCIPLINED.
SHE SAYS SHE'LL RETIRE THE MINUTE SHE FEELS HER ABILITY START TO DIMINISH.
WE HAVE TO ASPIRE TO BE LIKE THEM.
SFX: Pa-pa-pa-chi-pa-pa-pa-chi-pa-pa-pa (Clap clap clap clap clap)
ALL THE EXCITEMENT HAS MADE ME THIRSTY!
I'LL GO GET SOME SODAS!
MASUMI-CHAN!
SFX: Don (Whump)
OOPS
MUSTN'T SPILL
Concessions
OW!
HEY!
CAREFUL!
OH!
OH... IT'S YOU!

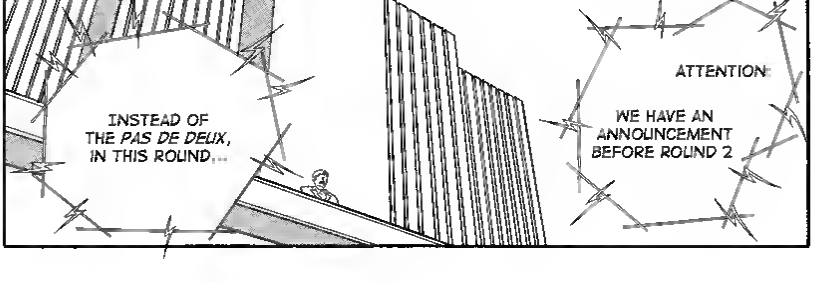

YOU'RE ...
IN THE COMPETITION.
YOUR NAME IS...?
WHAT!?
I'M HIJIRI MASUMI ...
MASUMI-CHAN...
HEY!
ALEXE! RECOMMENDED YOU.
AH, THAT'S RIGHT.
SHUNICHI!
You're Lightning
WHAT THE...?
NO... NO WAY! BUT... ME... WHY?



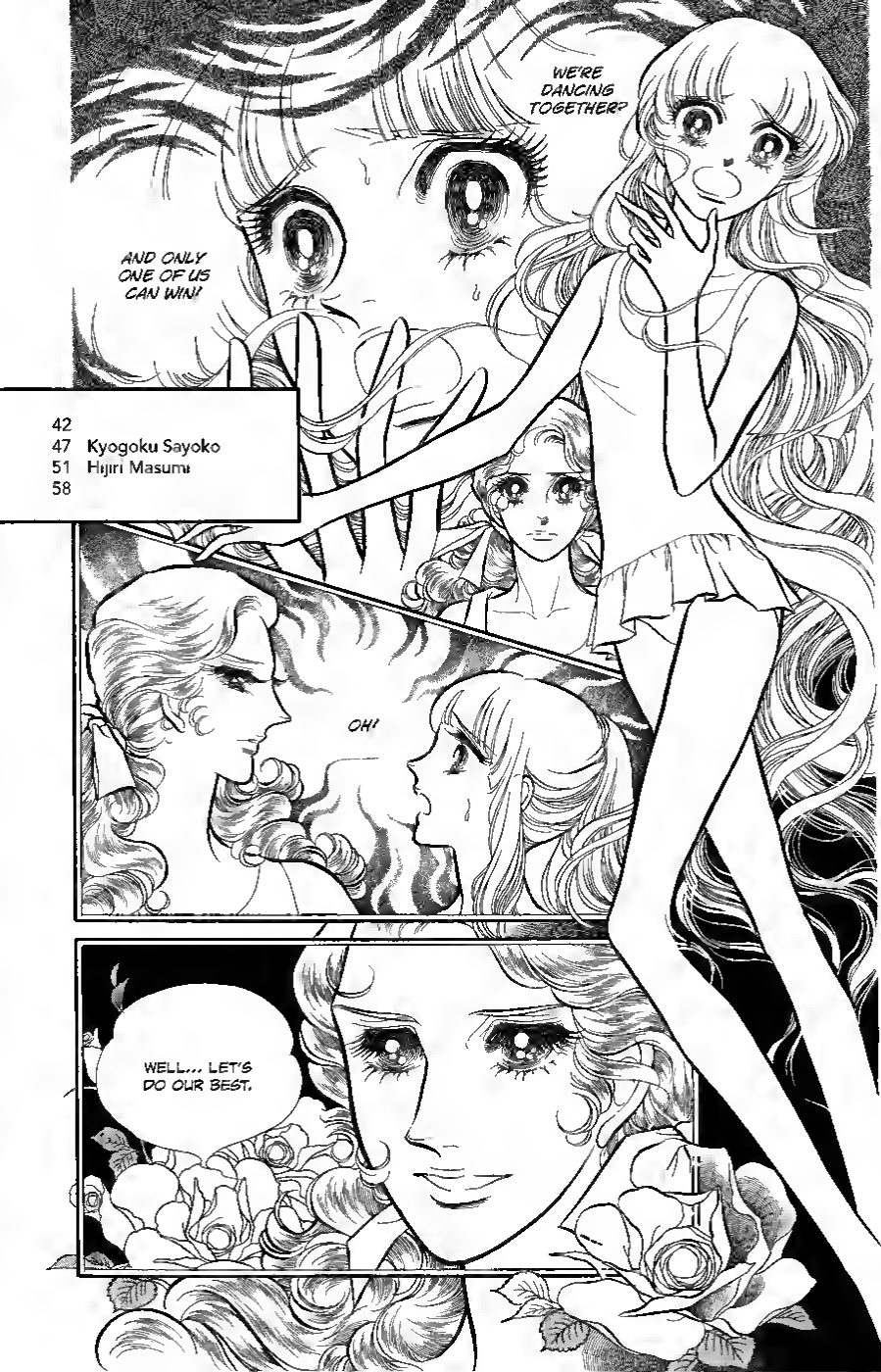
SFX: *Katsu (Blush)*


BUT...
YOUR BACKING NOTWITHSTANDING, WILL SHE DO OKAY IN ROUNDS 2 AND 3?
I JUST DON'T SEE THE TALENT THAT YOU INSIST IS THERE.
HAHAHA! SHE TURNED ALL RED!

SHE'LL BE ELIMINATED.
IF HER SCORES ARE LOW IN ROUNDS 2 AND 3...
SO WE'RE NOT MAKING ANY MORE EXCEPTIONS!
YOUR GAMBLE COULD AFFECT THE ENTIRE BALLET WORLD OF JAPAN...


INSTEAD OF THE *PAS DE DEUX*, IN THIS ROUND...
ATTENTION
WE HAVE AN ANNOUNCEMENT BEFORE ROUND 2

わあっ
YOU WILL BE DANCING SOLOS, TO SHOWCASE YOUR TALENTS.
sex. Wait!
AND, YOU WILL DANCE *VARIATIONS* OF OUR CHOOSING WITH THE PERSON CLOSEST TO YOUR NUMBER.
WITHOUT REHEARSING!?
WE WILL BE ELIMINATING ONE IN EACH PAIR.
WHY, THAT MEANS..
KYOGOKU-SAN AND ME!?

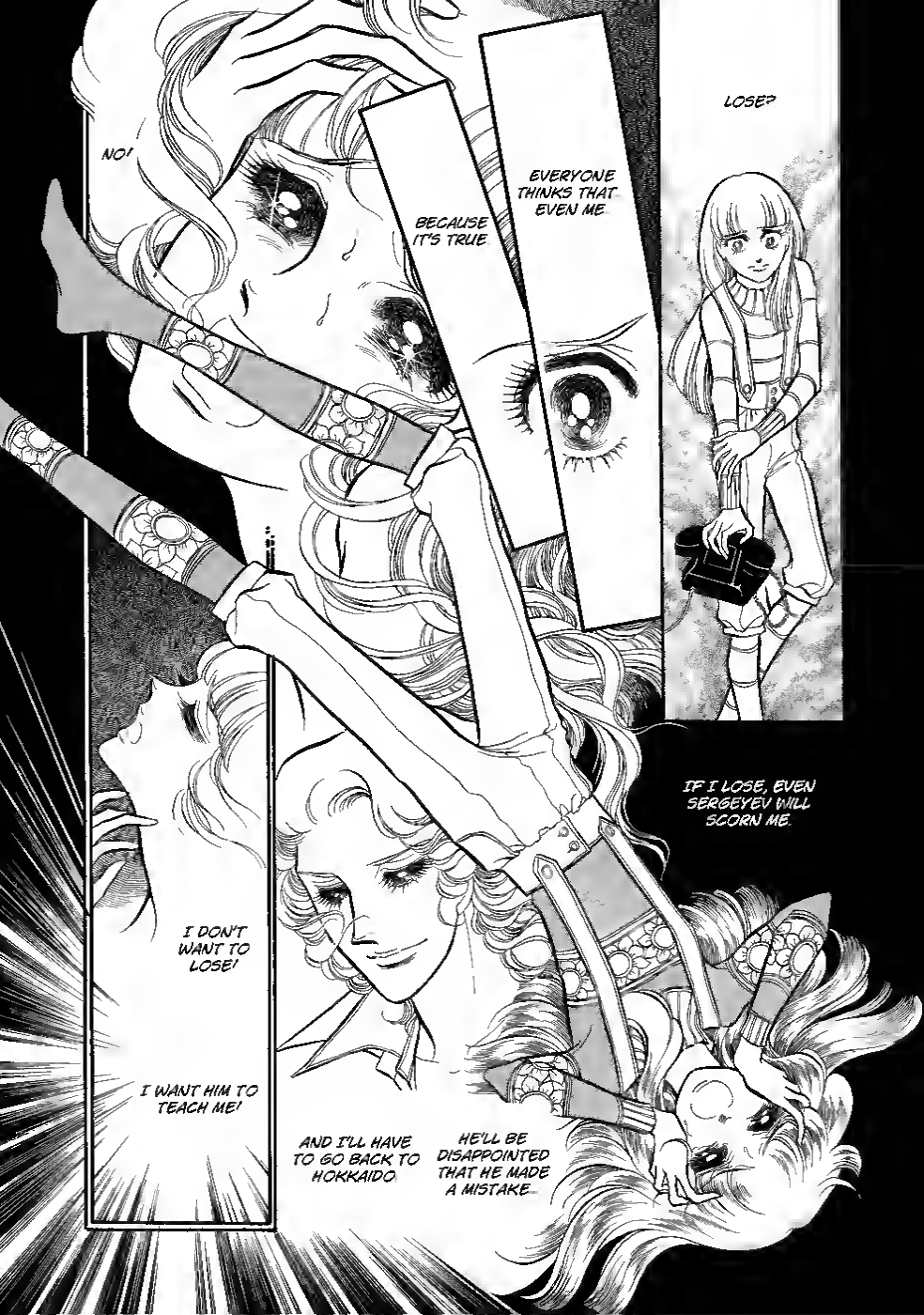

WE'RE DANCING TOGETHER?
AND ONLY ONE OF US CAN WIN!
42
47 Kyogoku Sayoko
51 Hijiri Masumi
58
OH!
WELL... LET'S DO OUR BEST.

Y... YES!
...!
...
WELL, THIS IS INTERESTING!
MAYBE ...
JUST MAYBE...
SOMETHING TOTALLY UNEXPECTED WILL HAPPEN!

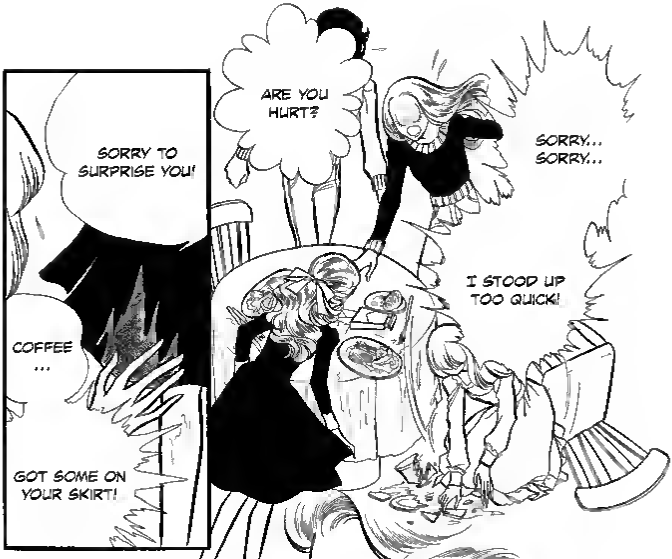
HMM...
WHAT DANCE.. WILL THEY SPRING ON US?
EVEN IF I KNEW ALREADY, IF KYOGOKU-SAN IS MY COMPETITION..
Ack! ★
THERE'S NO WAY!
Urgh! ★
AH, BUT WHAT DID I EXPECT?
ALL I WANTED TO DO WAS DANCE IN A BIG COMPETITION, JUST ONCE.
sniff

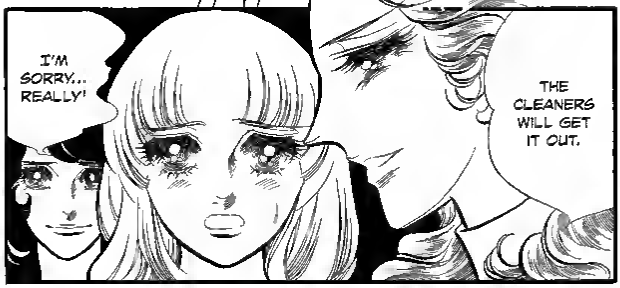
SFX. Dote (Crumple)

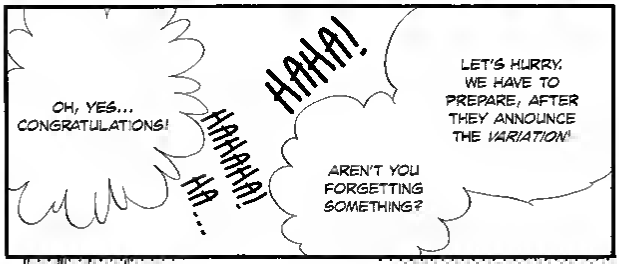
SO IT'S TRUE
GUESS WHO RECOMMENDED YOU FOR THIS EVENT!
ALEXEI SERGEYEV OF BOLSHOI BALLET!
SFX: Doki (Ba-thump)
Tears
ANYWAY, ABOUT YOUR INVITATION...
THAT'S HARSH.
I'M KIDDING! BUT GUESS WHAT?
HOW DID HE KNOW YOUR NAME OR THAT YOU WERE FROM HOKKAIDO?
THE BALLET ASSOCIATION TOLD SENSE!
BUT WHY?
I BETTER GET SOME AUTOGRAPHS BEFORE I LOSE
BUG OFF!
SFX: Gachan (Slam)
THANKS.
HANG IN THERE... WE'RE LOOKING FORWARD...
どてどてっ
TO THOSE AUTOGRAPHS!
SFX: Dote dotetsu (Crumple)


LOSE?
NO!
EVERYONE THINKS THAT EVEN ME
BECAUSE IT'S TRUE
IF I LOSE, EVEN SERGEYEV WILL SCORN ME
I DON'T WANT TO LOSE!
I WANT HIM TO TEACH ME!
AND I'LL HAVE TO GO BACK TO HOKKAIDO
HE'LL BE DISAPPOINTED THAT HE MADE A MISTAKE

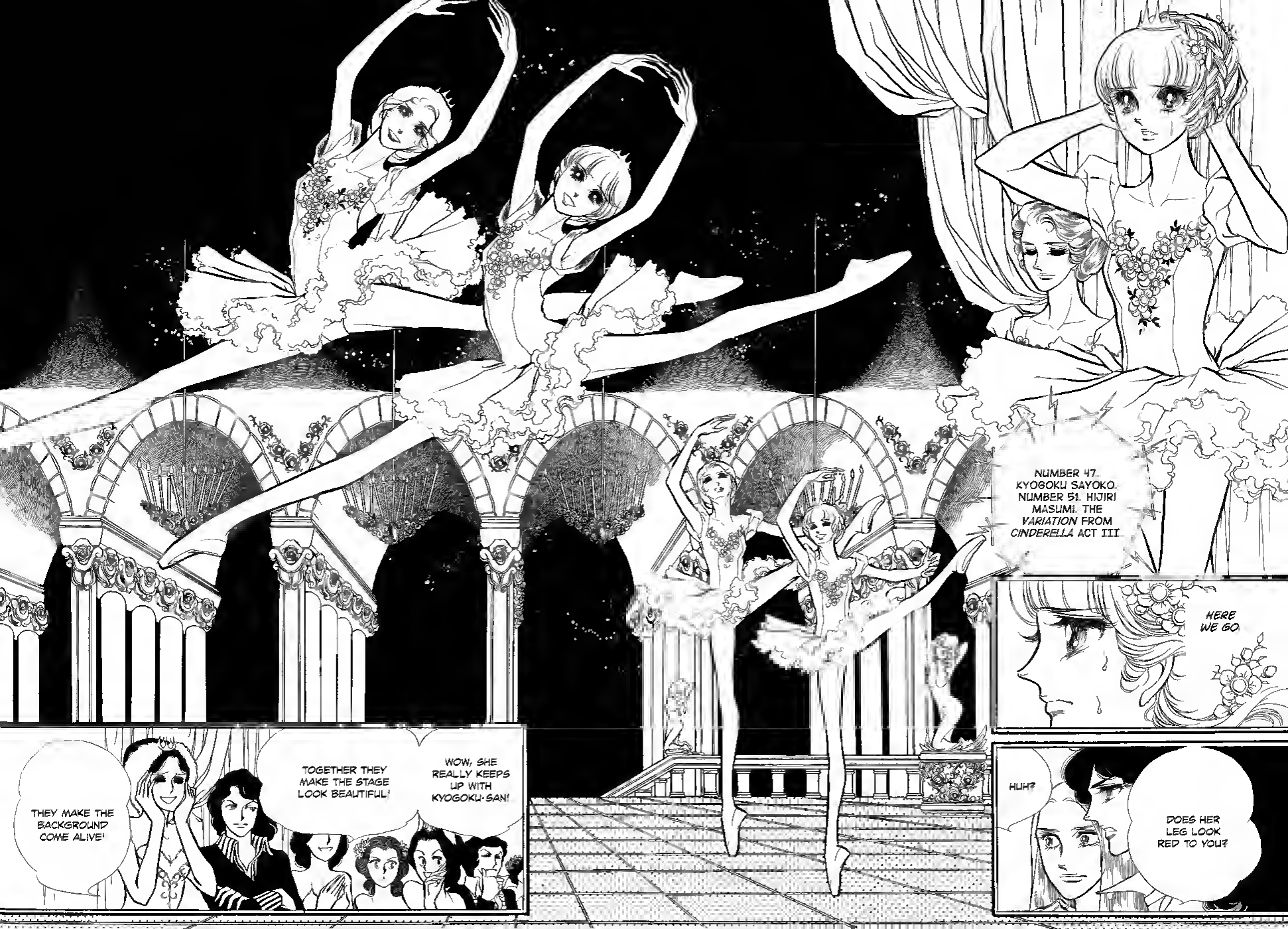
ROUND 2 WILL START SOON.
WHAT'S WRONG?
OH... YES!
HE HELPED ME UP BACKSTAGE THAT TIME..
PLEASE RAISE ME UP ONCE AGAIN!
WE BOTH PASSED ROUND 2, OF COURSE!
G'MORNING, LADIES!
Eek!
OH!

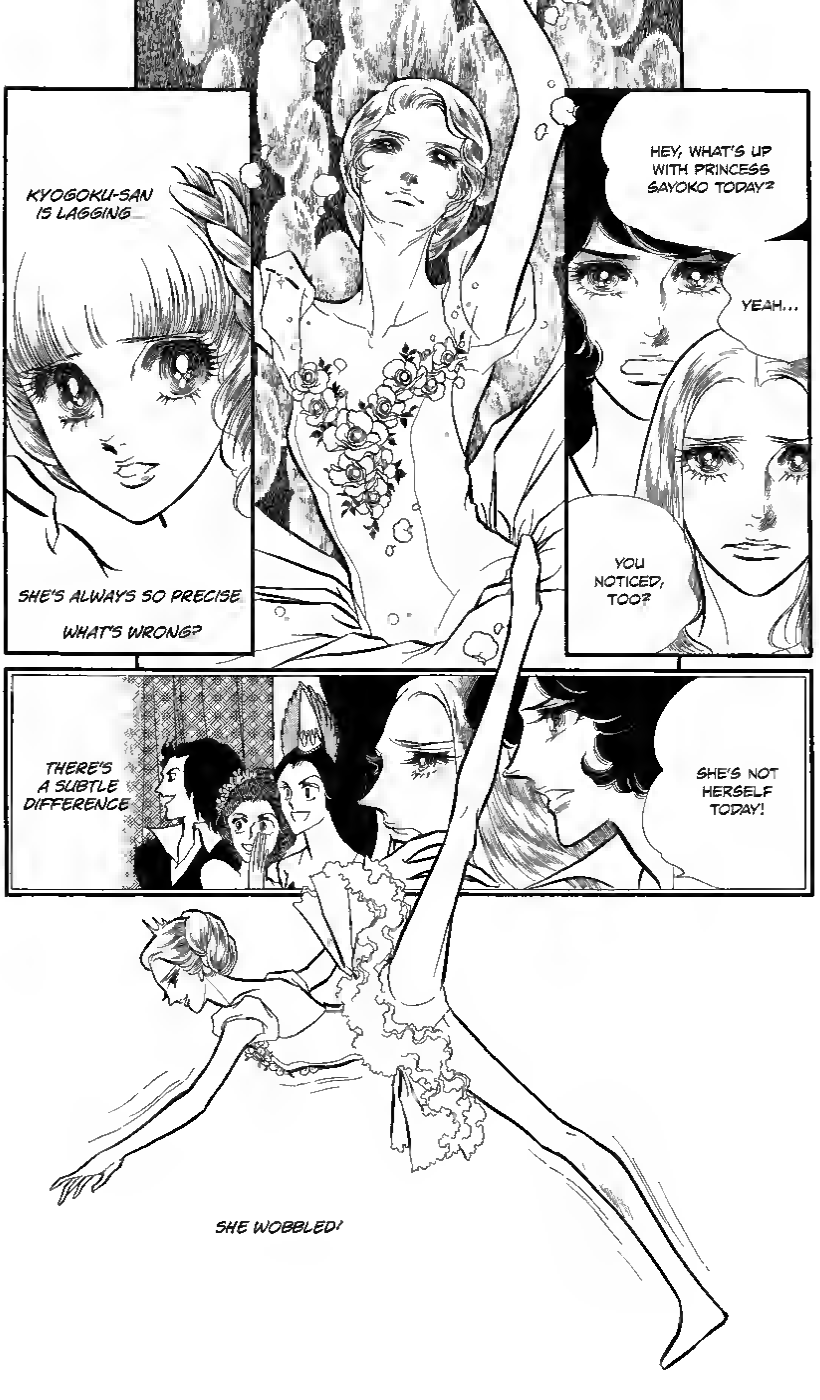




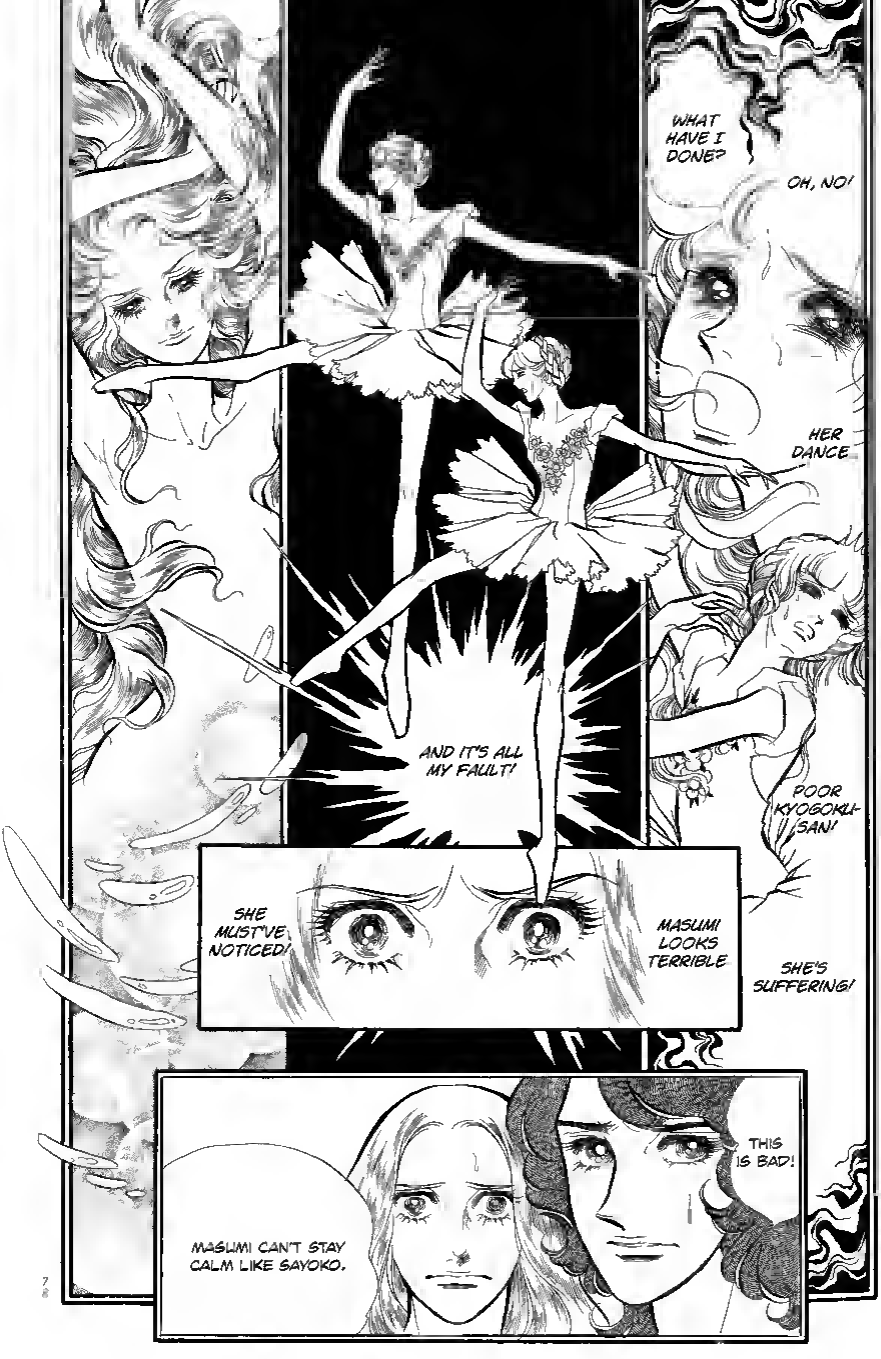

OH, YES... CONGRATULATIONS!
HAHAHA! HA...
HAHA!
LET'S HURRY. WE HAVE TO PREPARE, AFTER THEY ANNOUNCE THE *VARIATION*!
AREN'T YOU FORGETTING SOMETHING?

42 *Cinderella - Variation from Act III*
47 Kyogoku Sayoko
51 Hijiri Masumi
The Fountain of Bakhchisarai
57

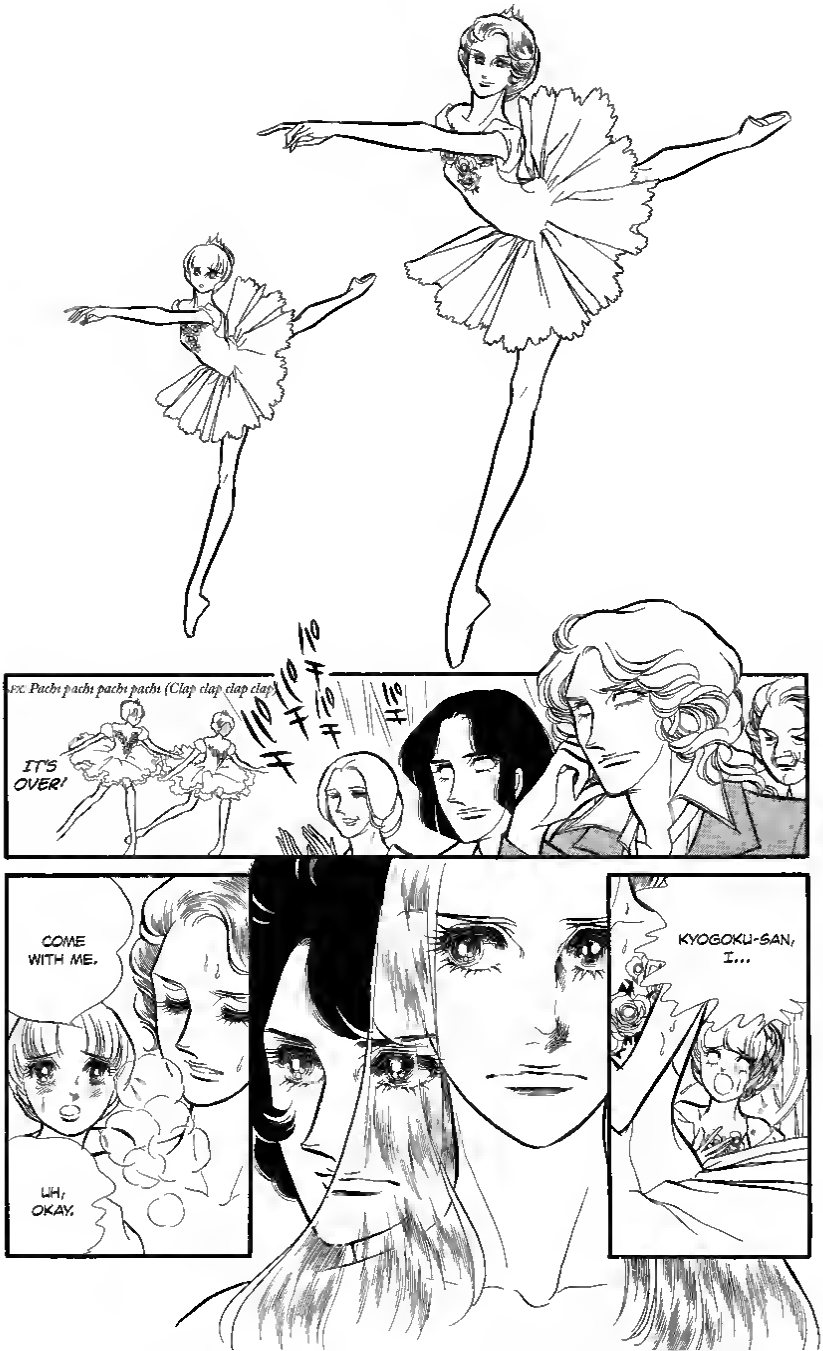

NUMBER 47. KYOGOKU SAYOKO. NUMBER 51. HIJIRI MASUMI. THE *VARIATION* FROM *CINDERELLA* ACT III
HERE WE GO.
HUH?
DOES HER LEG LOOK RED TO YOU?
THEY MAKE THE BACKGROUND COME ALIVE!
TOGETHER THEY MAKE THE STAGE LOOK BEAUTIFUL!
WOW, SHE REALLY KEEPS UP WITH KYOGOKU-SAN!


KYOGOKU-SAN IS LAGGING...
SHE'S ALWAYS SO PRECISE
WHAT'S WRONG?
HEY, WHAT'S UP WITH PRINCESS SAYOKO TODAY?
YEAH...
YOU NOTICED, TOO?
THERE'S A SUBTLE DIFFERENCE
SHE'S NOT HERSELF TODAY!
SHE WOBBLED!

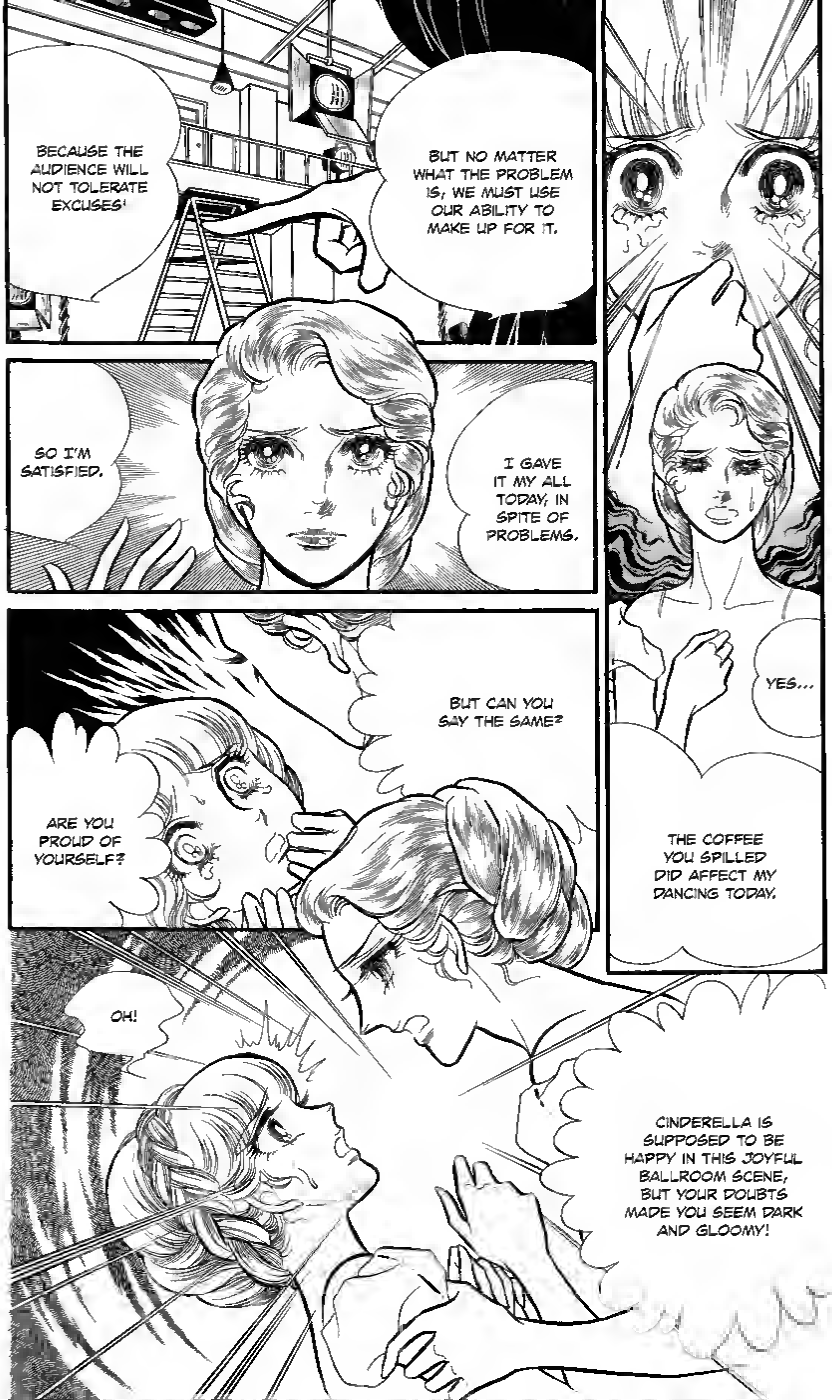
HER LEG IS...
BURNED!
HER LEG!
AT BREAKFAST, WHEN I SPILLED THE COFFEE...
IT BURNED HER LEGS!
Judges

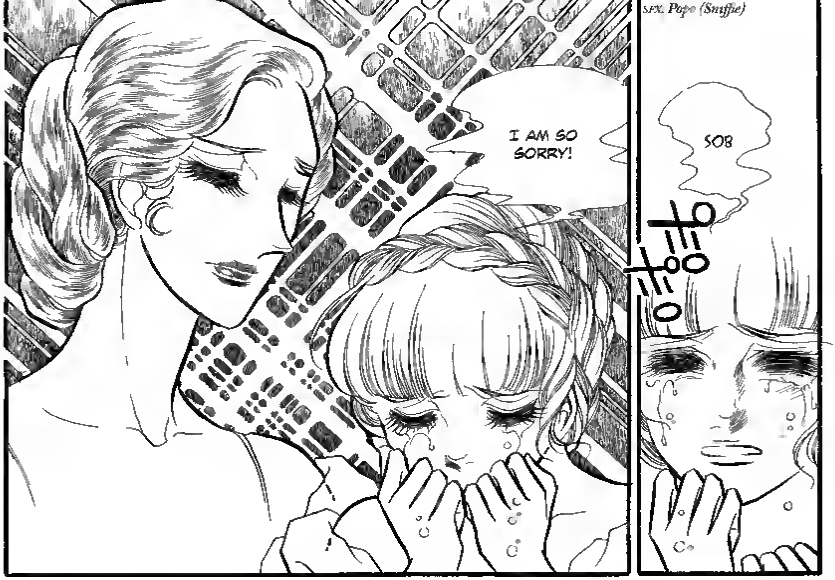

WHAT HAVE I DONE?
OH, NO!
HER DANCE
AND IT'S ALL MY FAULT!
POOR KYOGOKU-SAN!
SHE MUST'VE NOTICED!
MASUMI LOOKS TERRIBLE
SHE'S SUFFERING!
THIS IS BAD!
MASUMI CAN'T STAY CALM LIKE SAYOKO.

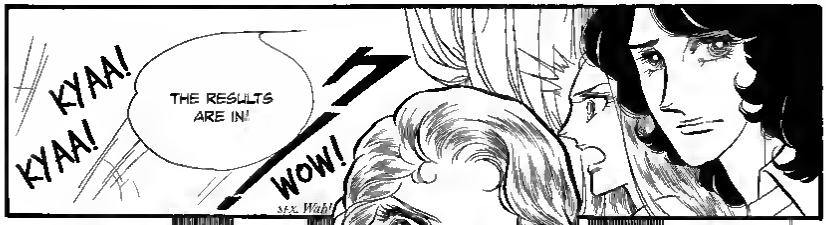
In classic dance, dancers must not show any personal emotions on stage, except what their character requires
Most people are suprised to look through opera glasses and see that the sweetly smiling ballerina is usually drenched in sweat from the exertion.

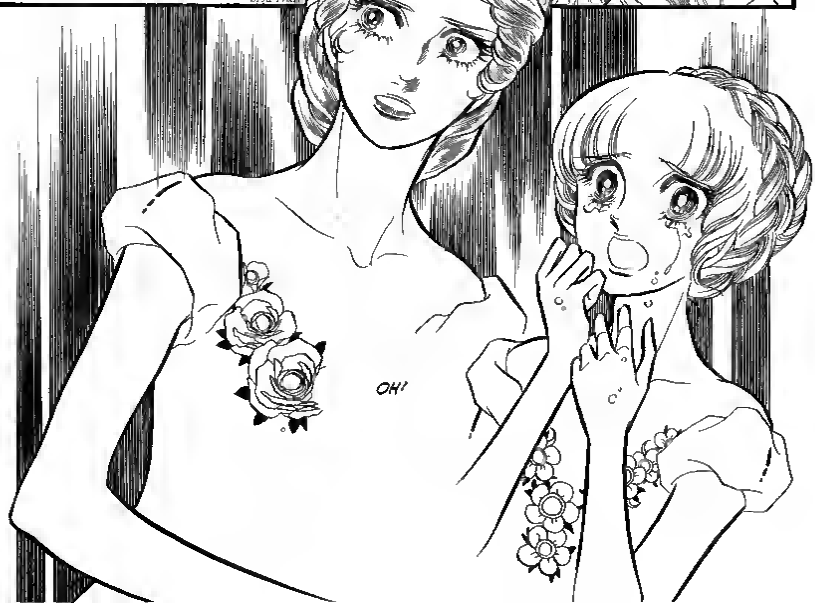

FX: Pachi pachi pachi pachi (Clap clap clap clap)
パチパチ
パチパチ
パチ
IT'S OVER!
COME WITH ME.
UH, OKAY.
KYOGOKU-SAN, I...

110
SFX. Pan (Smack)
OUCH!
sniff
I...
I...
SPILLED COFFEE ON YOU...
AH...!
SO? THAT'S YOUR EXCUSE FOR NOT DANCING YOUR BEST?
YOU'RE INSULTING ME!
THIS IS A SERIOUS COMPETITION!
WHAT WERE YOU THINKING?


BECAUSE THE AUDIENCE WILL NOT TOLERATE EXCUSES!
BUT NO MATTER WHAT THE PROBLEM IS, WE MUST USE OUR ABILITY TO MAKE UP FOR IT.
SO I'M SATISFIED.
I GAVE IT MY ALL TODAY, IN SPITE OF PROBLEMS.
YES...
THE COFFEE YOU SPILLED DID AFFECT MY DANCING TODAY.
BUT CAN YOU SAY THE SAME?
ARE YOU PROUD OF YOURSELF?
OH!
CINDERELLA IS SUPPOSED TO BE HAPPY IN THIS JOYFUL BALLROOM SCENE, BUT YOUR DOUBTS MADE YOU SEEM DARK AND GLOOMY!


I AM SO SORRY!
SOB
SFX. Pop (Sniffle)


KYAA!
KYAA!
THE RESULTS ARE IN!
WOW!
SFX. Wah!


OH!

SOB
MASUMI-CHAN!
110
8.60
7.95
7.45
38 Seki Makoto
42 Ishi Michiko
47 Kyogoku Sayoko
51 Hijiri Masumi
59 Takamizawa Chiko
8.50
8.75
9.15
8.25
SOB

SFX: Waaaah
わあん
SOB SOB SOB
SFX: Biku (Jolt)
HUH?

BALLET ...
IS BASED ON GRUELING DAILY LESSONS AND MENTAL DISCIPLINE.
IT DOESN'T MEAN YOU DIDN'T DO A FINE JOB.
EVEN WITH A LEG INJURY.
THAT'S WHY SHE STILL SCORED SO HIGH,
THAT'S THE BEAUTY OF IT.
I'M NOT CRYING BECAUSE I LOST.
NO.
THAT'S NOT IT.
I'M CRYING BECAUSE I KNOW THAT I'M NO MATCH FOR KYOGOKU-SAN.
NO.
IT'S JUST ...
TOO BAD.

I NEVER EVEN TRIED TO DANCE MY BEST
MY GUILT DISTRACTED ME SO MUCH
HOW DISRESPECTFUL... I FEEL TERRIBLE.
PHEW.

I NEED TO SAY MY GOODBYES
BEFORE GOING BACK TO HOKKAIDO..
SFX. Gacha (Click)
Room 107
Hijiri Masumi
THEY HELPED ME SO MUCH.
Hijiri Masumi
OH!
WHERE'S KYOGOKU-SAN?
REHEARSING IN THE BASEMENT.

AWESOME
ALREADY PRACTICING FOR ROUND 3
SHE'S DOING OCEAN AND PEARLS
DON QUIXOTE FOR KUSAKABE-SAN
AND AOI-SAN...?

SWAN

ARIYOSHI KYOKO

MARIS
SCANNER

MAYA PERRY (CMX)
TRANSLATOR

MARIS
PROOFREADER

MARIS
EDITOR

MARIS
QUALITY CONTROL

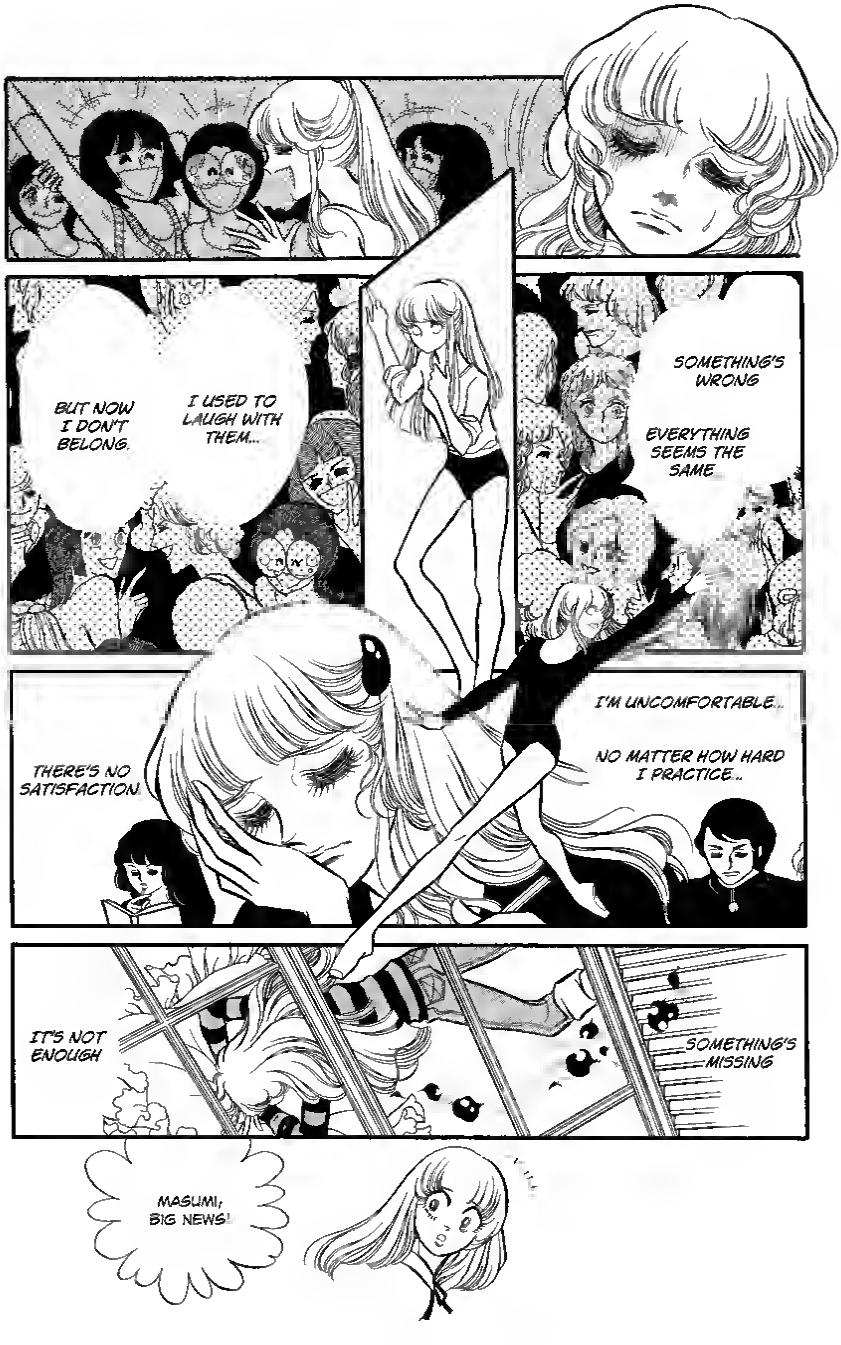
SHOUJO MANGA MANIAC
WWW.SHOUJO-MANGA.ORG

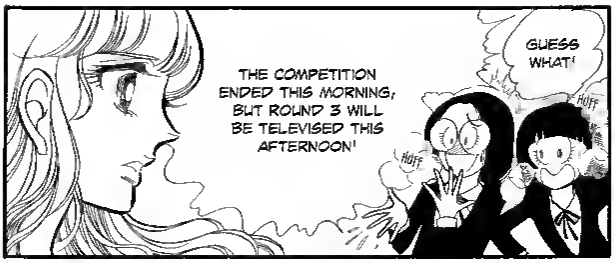
I CAN'T... DO THIS
THANK YOU, EVERYONE
I'LL MISS YOU ALL
GOOD LUCK IN ROUND 3.
GOODBYE
DAD!

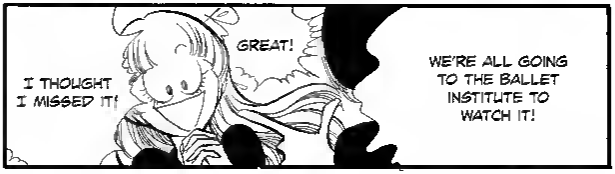
HERE'S YOUR CHEESE TOAST, EGGS WITH BACON, AND CREAMED CAULIFLOWER.
YOU MUST'VE STARVED WHILE I WAS GONE.
WAKE UP, DAD!
IT'S SUNDAY BRUNCH!
YAWN
WE'RE WORKING ON "THE BLUEBIRD" TODAY I'M EXCITED.
YUP, GOTTA MAKE THE MOST OF MY WEEKEND LESSONS.
OFF TO THE BALLET INSTITUTE?
POOR GIRL
SHE MUST BE HEART-BROKEN
LATER, DAD!

JUST LIKE BEFORE
LESSONS WITH THE GANG
IT'LL BE GREAT.
HOW FUN
YOU WERE SUPPOSED TO HELP ME TODAY!
BUT, SENSEI!
WITH ABE-SENSEI OUT, AND THE CHILDREN'S CLASS TO OVERSEE...
YES, BUT...
...
MASUMI, WE CAN SLACK OFF NOW!
PRACTICE ON YOUR OWN, EVERYONE!
SENSEI?
HURRY, SENSEI!
BE RIGHT THERE!

SFX. Wai wai (Chitter chatter)
SFX. Kyaa, Kyaa!
Let's go get some ramen
Hideki rules!
I love Momoe
WE'RE USED TO PRACTICING BY OURSELVES.
SENSEI IS ALWAYS BUSY.
SUCH A RACKET!
KYAA!
WHAT THE...?
SFX. Wan wan wan wan (Chitter chatter)
MOMMY IS BUSY!
NO ANIMALS!
MASARU!
GYAH!
WHAT A RASCAL!
Haha! Hahaha!
THAT MASARU! Hai ★
SFX. Zuden (Fall)


I USED TO LAUGH WITH THEM...
BUT NOW I DON'T BELONG.
SOMETHING'S WRONG
EVERYTHING SEEMS THE SAME
I'M UNCOMFORTABLE..
NO MATTER HOW HARD I PRACTICE..
THERE'S NO SATISFACTION
IT'S NOT ENOUGH
SOMETHING'S MISSING
MASUMI, BIG NEWS!



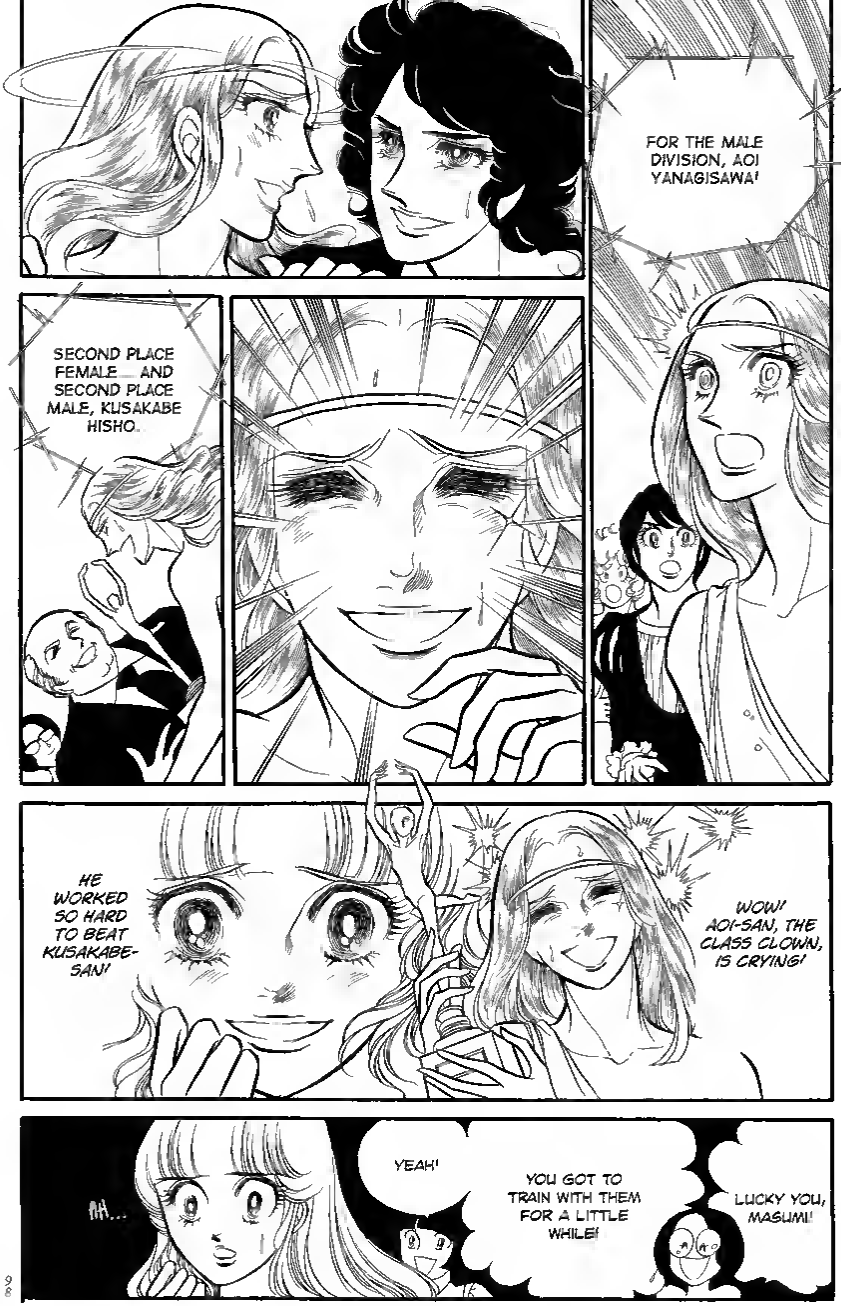


THE TOP SIX TEAMS, 12 ENTRANTS IN TOTAL, WILL BECOME FINALISTS!
IN ROUND 3, 31 ENTRANTS WILL BE DANCING NEW *PAS DE DEUX* WITH NEW PARTNERS.
LOOK! IT'S HISHO-SAN!
ミレナ・ミレナ・

SFX. Doki doki doki (Ba-thump ba-thump ba-thump)

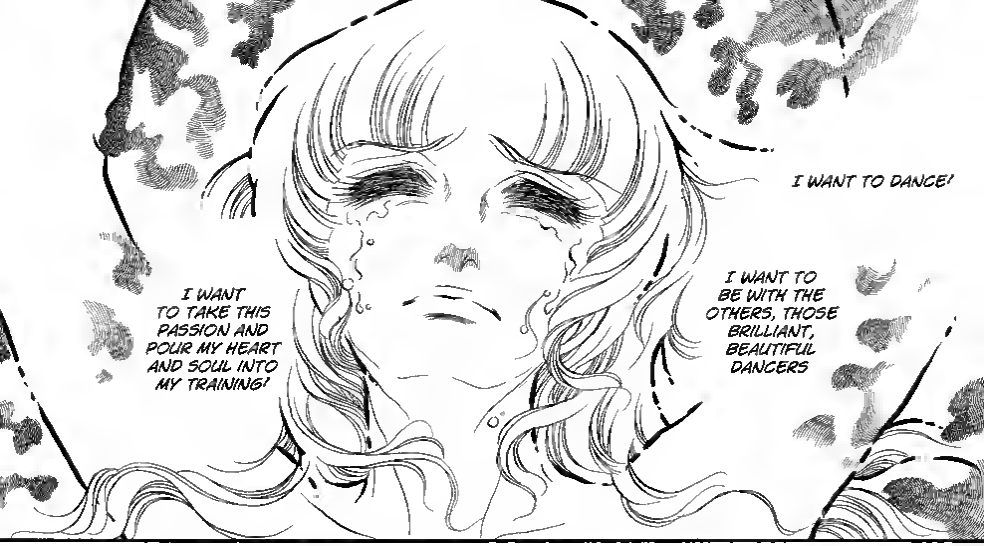
ASAGI YUKA AND KUSAKABE HISHO, IN *DON QUIXOTE*.
KYOGOKU SAYOKO AND YANAGISAWA AOI, IN *OCEAN AND PEARLS*
WOW... THEY PAIRED UP AOI-SAN AND KYOGOKU-SAN!

SFX: *Pachi pachi (Clap clap)*


FOR THE MALE DIVISION, AOI YANAGISAWA!
SECOND PLACE FEMALE... AND SECOND PLACE MALE, KUSAKABE HISHO.
WOW! AOI-SAN, THE CLASS CLOWN, IS CRYING!
HE WORKED SO HARD TO BEAT KUSAKABE-SAN!
AH...
YEAH!
YOU GOT TO TRAIN WITH THEM FOR A LITTLE WHILE!
LUCKY YOU, MASUMI!

WE BECAME REALLY CLOSE.
TRUE...
FOR A SHORT TIME...
ONCE ON STAGE, PERSONAL EMOTIONS MUSTN'T GET IN THE WAY!
DANCE FULL OUT TO THE VERY END!
THE BEAUTY OF BALLET LIES IN THE GRUELING TRAINING AND MENTAL DISCIPLINE.
SFX: Datsu (Dash)
MASUMI?

EVERYTHING THEY TOLD ME EVERYTHING THEY DID... IT WAS ALL ABOUT THE DISCIPLINE OF BALLET!
I GET IT NOW!
I CAN FEEL IT EXPLODING IN MY HEART... LIKE I'M GOING TO BURST! BECAUSE OF THEM, IN JUST THAT SHORT TIME!
I WANT A TEACHER WHO WILL MOLD ME INTO SOMETHING BEAUTIFUL! I WANT IT NOW, MORE THAN EVER!
NOW I WANT THE HARSH WORLD OF BALLET! I WANT IT MORE THAN EVER!

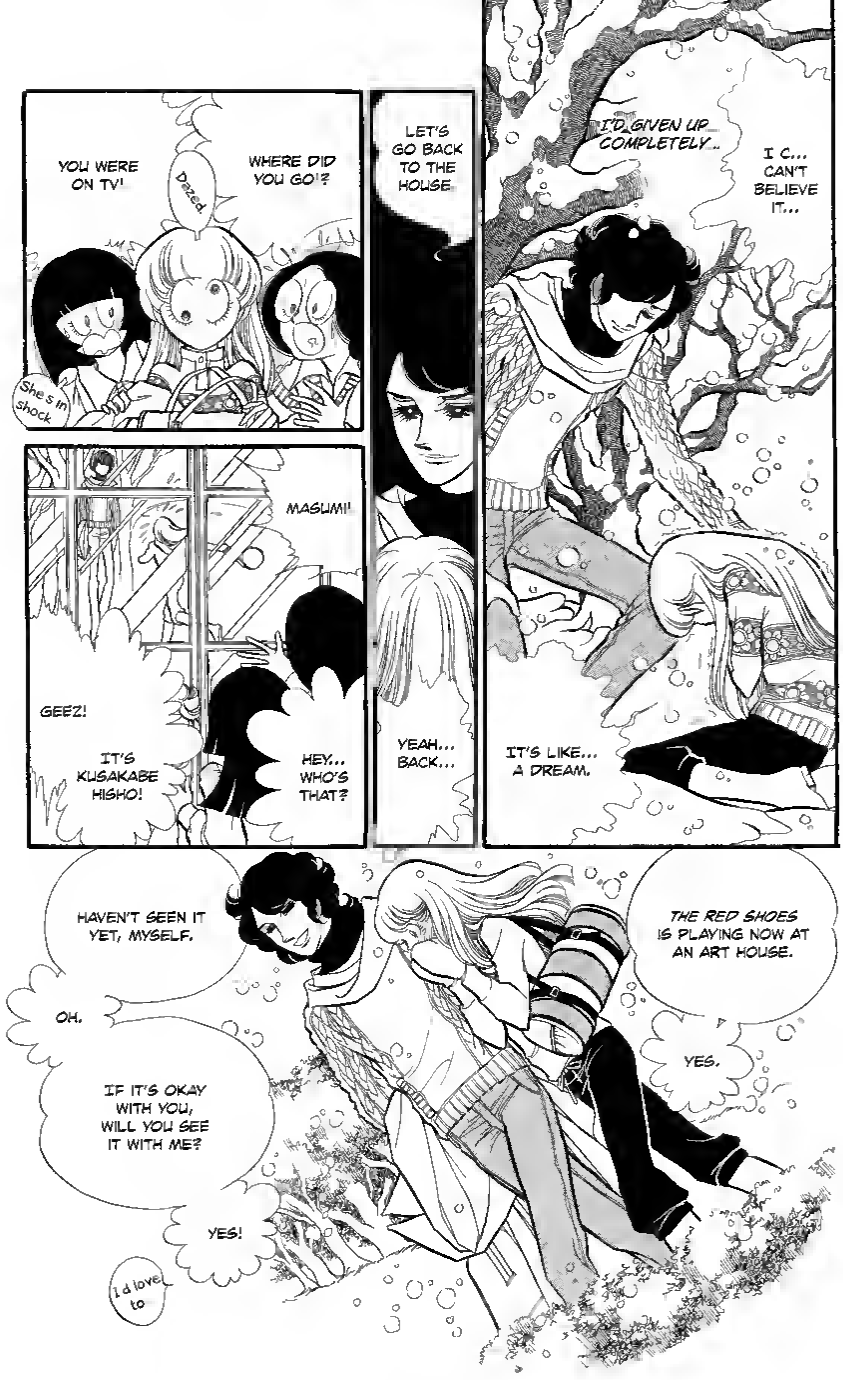

I WANT TO DANCE!
I WANT TO BE WITH THE OTHERS, THOSE BRILLIANT, BEAUTIFUL DANCERS
I WANT TO TAKE THIS PASSION AND POUR MY HEART AND SOUL INTO MY TRAINING!

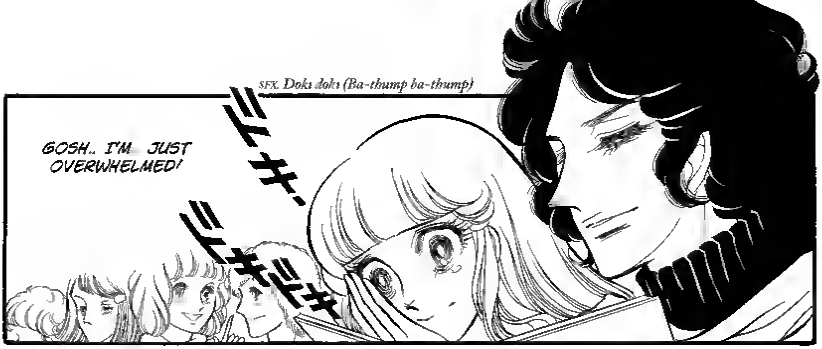
FOR A TOTAL OF NINE STUDENTS
BECAUSE THE JUDGES SAW GREAT POTENTIAL... HIJIRI MASUMI.
KYOGOKU SAYOKO, KUSAKABE HISHO, YANAGISAWA AOI...
THOSE ELIGIBLE FOR LESSONS FROM THE JUDGES INCLUDING SERGEYEV ARE...
WHAT!?
THESE EIGHT, PLUS ONE EXCEPTION FROM ROUND 2...
WHERE'D SHE GO?
MASUMI?

IT'S WINTER ALREADY.
I FORGOT THAT IN HOKKAIDO...
WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE!?
KUSAKABE-SAN!

I CAME AS SOON AS I HEARD.
H... HUH?
DID YOU ALREADY SEE IT ON TV? CONGRATULATIONS!
NO... WAY...
Uh... Uhh Uhh Uh...
WHAT!?
I'M GETTING PRIVATE LESSONS, TOO!?

SEX: Petan (Slump)


I'D GIVEN UP COMPLETELY...
I C... CAN'T BELIEVE IT...
IT'S LIKE... A DREAM.
LET'S GO BACK TO THE HOUSE.
YEAH... BACK...
MASUMI!
GEEZ!
IT'S KUSAKABE HISHO!
HEY... WHO'S THAT?
YOU WERE ON TV!
WHERE DID YOU GO!?
Dazed
She's in shock
THE RED SHOES IS PLAYING NOW AT AN ART HOUSE.
YES.
HAVEN'T SEEN IT YET, MYSELF.
OH.
IF IT'S OKAY WITH YOU, WILL YOU SEE IT WITH ME?
YES!
I'd love to



The Red Shoes, the tragic yet beautiful story of a ballerina, was produced as a movie in England in 1948, and caused a worldwide sensation.

The story was adapted from Hans Christian Andersen's tale about a young girl who could not stop dancing until her feet were amputated, and it featured the beautiful prima ballerina, Moira Shearer.

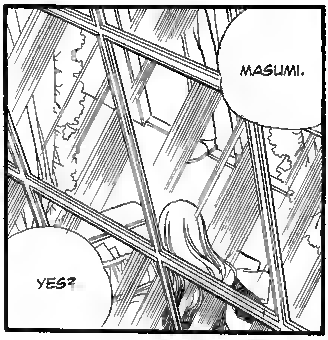
The heroine, Vicky Page, must choose between love and ballet, and although she initially selects love, she ends up choosing ballet. Shearer's performance, depicting this young woman who must dance to her own grave, touched many people deeply
Moira Shearer herself later became a housewife and mother of three children. It is said that the incredible popularity of this film was a burden for her, and she retired from ballet for love.
HAVE ON SOME RED SHOES.
PERSONALLY, I BELIEVE THAT...
ALL TRUE BALLERINAS...
POOR GIRL... SO SAD.

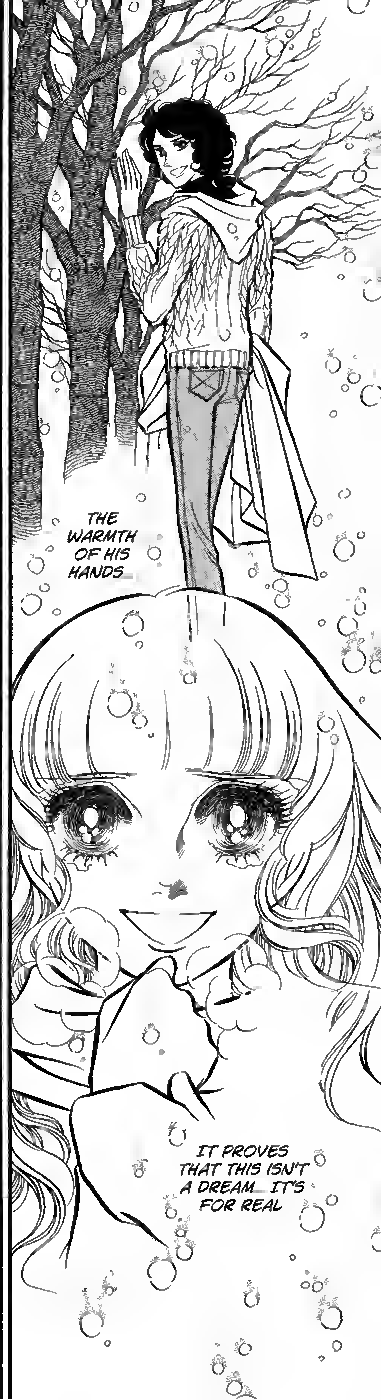
MORE SNOW...
I'M FROM HOKKAIDO, TOO.
SAPPORO CITY.
BUT I MOVED TO TOKYO IN MIDDLE SCHOOL...
TO STUDY WITH THE BEST TEACHERS.
ALL TRUE BALLERINAS WEAR RED SHOES.
RAMEN
HEY...
I DON'T WANT THIS TO END.
MY HOUSE IS THE OTHER WAY.
OH...
JUST WONDERING IF YOU WERE HUNGRY.
UM...
RAMEN

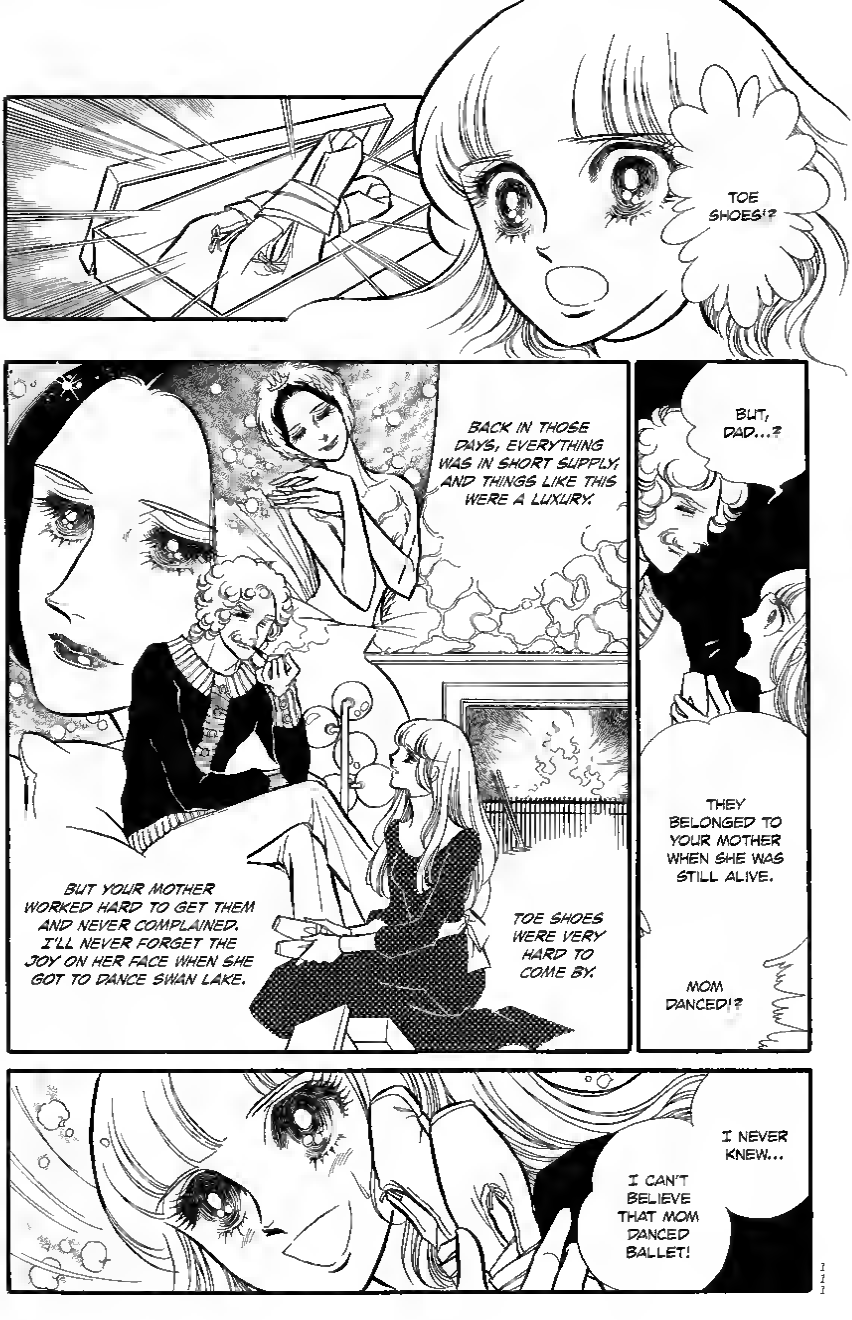
I DON'T WANT TO WAKE UP FROM THIS DREAM...
KUSAKABE-SAN KEEPS SMILING SO SWEETLY AT ME.
THIS FEELS LIKE AN EARLY CHRISTMAS PRESENT...
WHAT IS THIS FEELING?
ALTHOUGH IT'S OUR FIRST TIME TO TALK, IT FEELS SO COMFORTABLE

I WISH THIS STREET WENT ON FOREVER..
THANKS FOR EVERYTHING.
WELL, GOOD NIGHT.
BACK IN TOKYO!
SEE YOU FOUR DAYS FROM NOW...
YES!

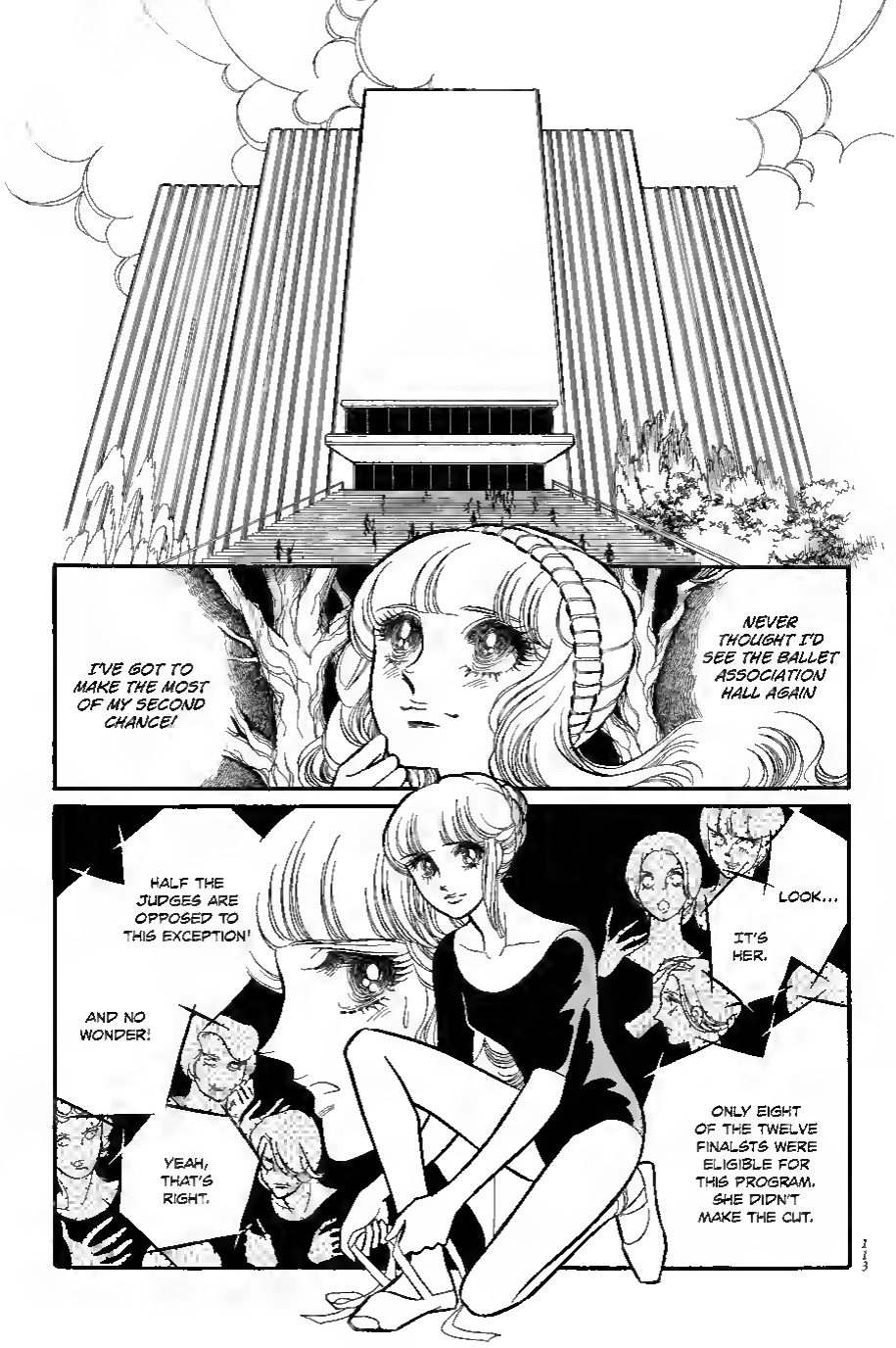
The next afternoon, an official notice arrived from the Ballet Association.






TOE SHOES!?
BACK IN THOSE DAYS, EVERYTHING WAS IN SHORT SUPPLY, AND THINGS LIKE THIS WERE A LUXURY.
BUT YOUR MOTHER WORKED HARD TO GET THEM AND NEVER COMPLAINED. I'LL NEVER FORGET THE JOY ON HER FACE WHEN SHE GOT TO DANCE SWAN LAKE.
TOE SHOES WERE VERY HARD TO COME BY.
BUT, DAD...?
THEY BELONGED TO YOUR MOTHER WHEN SHE WAS STILL ALIVE.
MOM DANCED!?
I NEVER KNEW...
I CAN'T BELIEVE THAT MOM DANCED BALLET!

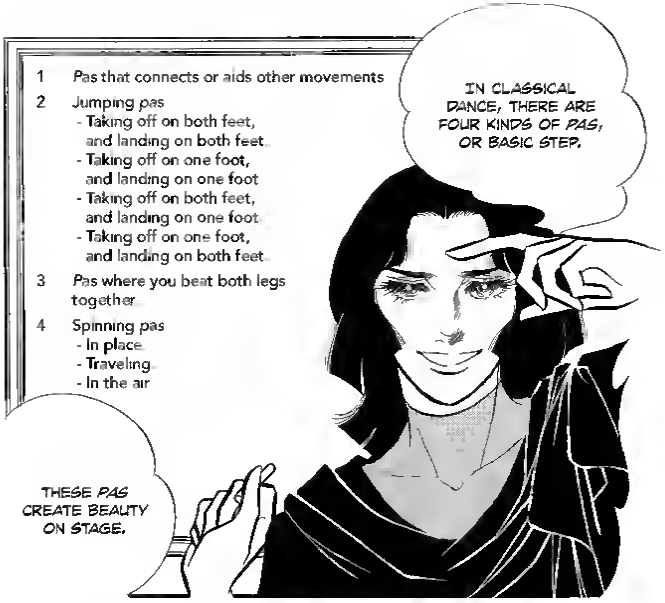
YOU'VE BEEN GIVEN A RARE OPPORTUNITY TO DO SOMETHING GREAT...
THE REST IS UP TO YOU.
YOU'RE JUST LIKE HER.
SO DEVOTED TO BALLET.
GO FOR IT, HONEY.
I'M ROOTING FOR YOU.
DAD...
THANKS, DAD!

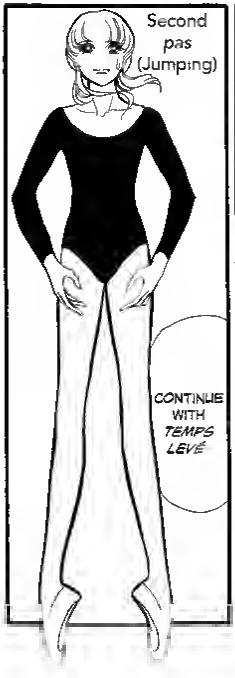

I'VE GOT TO MAKE THE MOST OF MY SECOND CHANCE!
NEVER THOUGHT I'D SEE THE BALLET ASSOCIATION HALL AGAIN
HALF THE JUDGES ARE OPPOSED TO THIS EXCEPTION!
AND NO WONDER!
YEAH, THAT'S RIGHT.
ONLY EIGHT OF THE TWELVE FINALSTS WERE ELIGIBLE FOR THIS PROGRAM. SHE DIDN'T MAKE THE CUT.
LOOK...
IT'S HER.

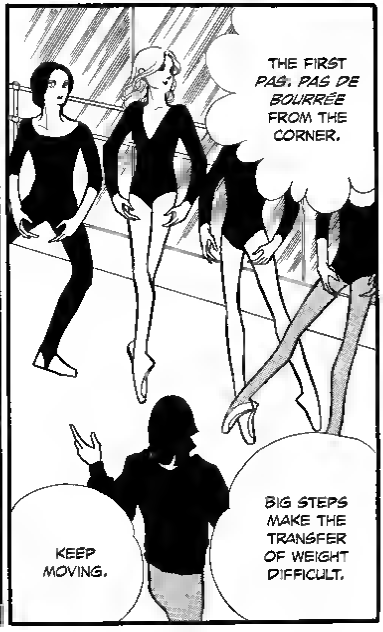
IT'S NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT.
I WAS LUCKY, TOO! I WAS DANCING WITH KUSAKABE-SAN AND GOT A LOWER SCORE THAN HIM, BUT I STILL BEAT OUT THE OTHERS IN THE FOURTH AND FIFTH PLACES, SO I GOT IN!
YOU MUST BE THE EXCEPTION, HIJIRI MASUMI!
CALL ME YUKA.
I'M ASAGI YUKA.
SFX: Doki (Ba thump)
LOOK! I SEE KUSAKABE-SAN! LET'S GO!
OKAY.
MASUMI-CHAN!

Notice to Students
The six faculty include
Alexei Sergeyev
G. Ulánova
S. Messerer
Tsutsumi Shunichi
Lessons will be in the studio next to the Ballet Association dormitory.
EN DEHORS, OUTWARDS. EN DEDANS, INWARDS.
MAINTAIN 45 DEGREES. YOUR LEGS ARE DROOPING!
THE TOES OF THE ROTATING LEG REST ON THE CALF OF THE STANDING LEG. NOW, ATTITUDE EN AVANT.

IN FIRST, THIRD, AND FIFTH POSITIONS, REMEMBER THE ARM MOVEMENTS.
GLIDE SMOOTHLY.
DEMI-PLIÉ IN EACH OF THE FIVE POSITIONS.
IF YOU WOBBLE, START OVER.
TWENTY REPETITIONS OF ALL FOUR ARABESQUES
YOU MUST TWIST MORE!
NO, NO!!
LET IT SINK IN TO THE UNCONCIOUS.
DON'T THINK! LEARN WITH YOUR BODY.
YOU AND YOU, FROM THE BEGINNING.
DO IT TILL IT'S PERFECT!


1 Pas that connects or aids other movements
2 Jumping pas
- Taking off on both feet, and landing on both feet
- Taking off on one foot, and landing on one foot
- Taking off on both feet, and landing on one foot
- Taking off on one foot, and landing on both feet
3 Pas where you beat both legs together
4 Spinning pas
- In place
- Traveling
- In the air
IN CLASSICAL DANCE, THERE ARE FOUR KINDS OF PAS, OR BASIC STEP.
THESE PAS CREATE BEAUTY ON STAGE.


Second pas (Jumping)
CONTINUE WITH TEMPS LEVÉ


THE FIRST PAS, PAS DE BOURRÉE FROM THE CORNER.
KEEP MOVING.
BIG STEPS MAKE THE TRANSFER OF WEIGHT DIFFICULT.

NEXT, THIRD PAS: BEATING THE LEGS, BATTERIE.
AFTERWARDS, FOURTH PAS: SPINNING, PIROUETTE.
SFX: Base (Flomp)
NOTHING BUT BASICS, BASICS! FOR A WHOLE WEEK!
GOSH, HOW BORING!
I EXPECTED MORE FROM FIRST-RATE INSTRUCTORS!
YEAH, RIGHT!
BUT BASICS ARE IMPORTANT.
I NEED MORE BASIC TRAINING!
YEAH, WELL, WHAT ABOUT ME...?
Gyahh
SFX: Bashi (Whack)
BUT I GUESS SHE HAS A POINT

ONE BY ONE, ENTRECHAT, QUATRE, OUT IN FRONT.
GEEZ...
BASICS AGAIN?
SFX: Patan (Slam)
YOU TWO.
THE ONES WHO JUST SPOKE...
LEAVE... NOW.
BUT... I...
IF YOU DON'T CARE FOR BASIC LESSONS, YOU DON'T NEED THESE LESSONS.
GET OUT! GO!

I said get out!
NOW!
WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR? YOU'RE INTERRUPTING THE OTHERS' LESSONS IN THE BASICS!
HE'S SPEAKING RUSSIAN!

BACK STRAIGHT. FINGERTIPS EXTENDED.
WATCH YOUR POSTURE!
MAINTAIN *PAS DE CHAT* UNTIL THE END!
I'M SORRY FOR TALKING.
SORRY...
I WAS GETTING BORED, TOO
BUT I REGRET IT NOW!
I HAVE TO ADMIT IN THE BACK OF MY MIND..

I'M COMPLETELY ASHAMED... IT KILLS ME!
HE YELLED AT US IN RUSSIAN!
HE WAS SO ENRAGED.
sfx: Biku (Flinch)
HOW... MORTIFYING!
WELL DONE!
YOU TWO, IN MY OFFICE.
YES! SIR!
TAKE A 40 MINUTE BREAK AND REST!

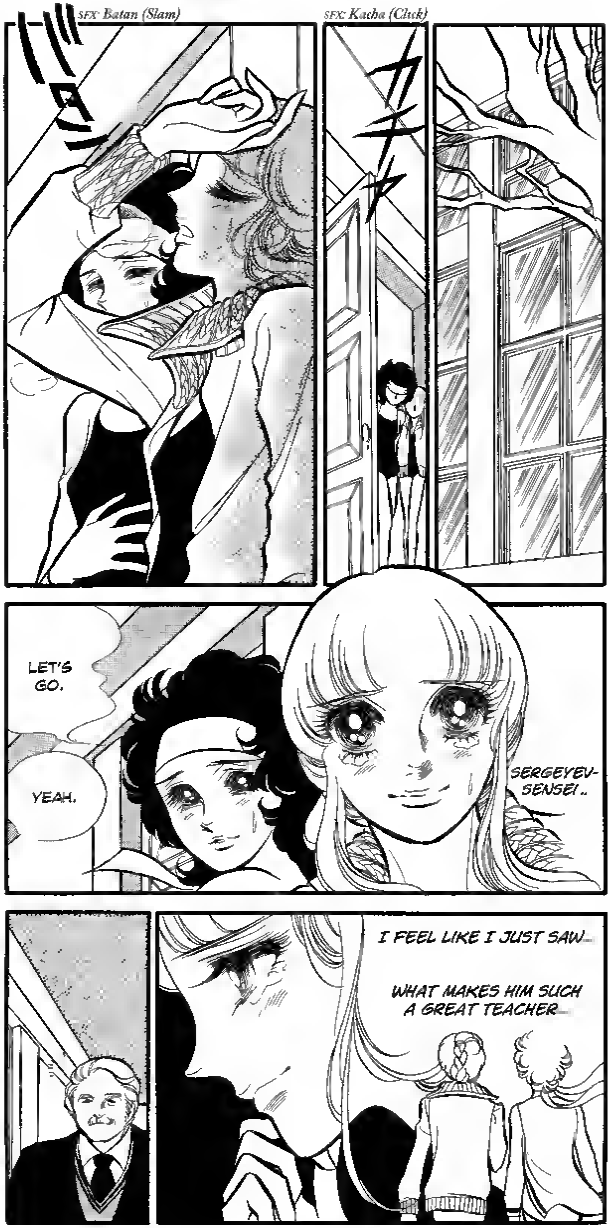
WOW!
THE FURNITURE IN THIS ROOM...
IT FEELS LIKE A FOREIGN COUNTRY.
ARE THEY ALL FURNISHED THIS WAY?
HOW MANY YEARS HAVE YOU TWO DONE BALLET?
UM...
SEVEN YEARS.
EIGHT, FOR ME!
HOW MANY LESSONS?
TWICE A WEEK.
ME, TOO.
HMPH... THAT'S ALL? NOT EVEN A THIRD OF THE WEEK.
ONE THIRD OF EIGHT YEARS ONLY ADDS UP TO 2.5 YEARS.
BALLET SCHOOLS IN OTHER COUNTRIES TRAIN FAR MORE.

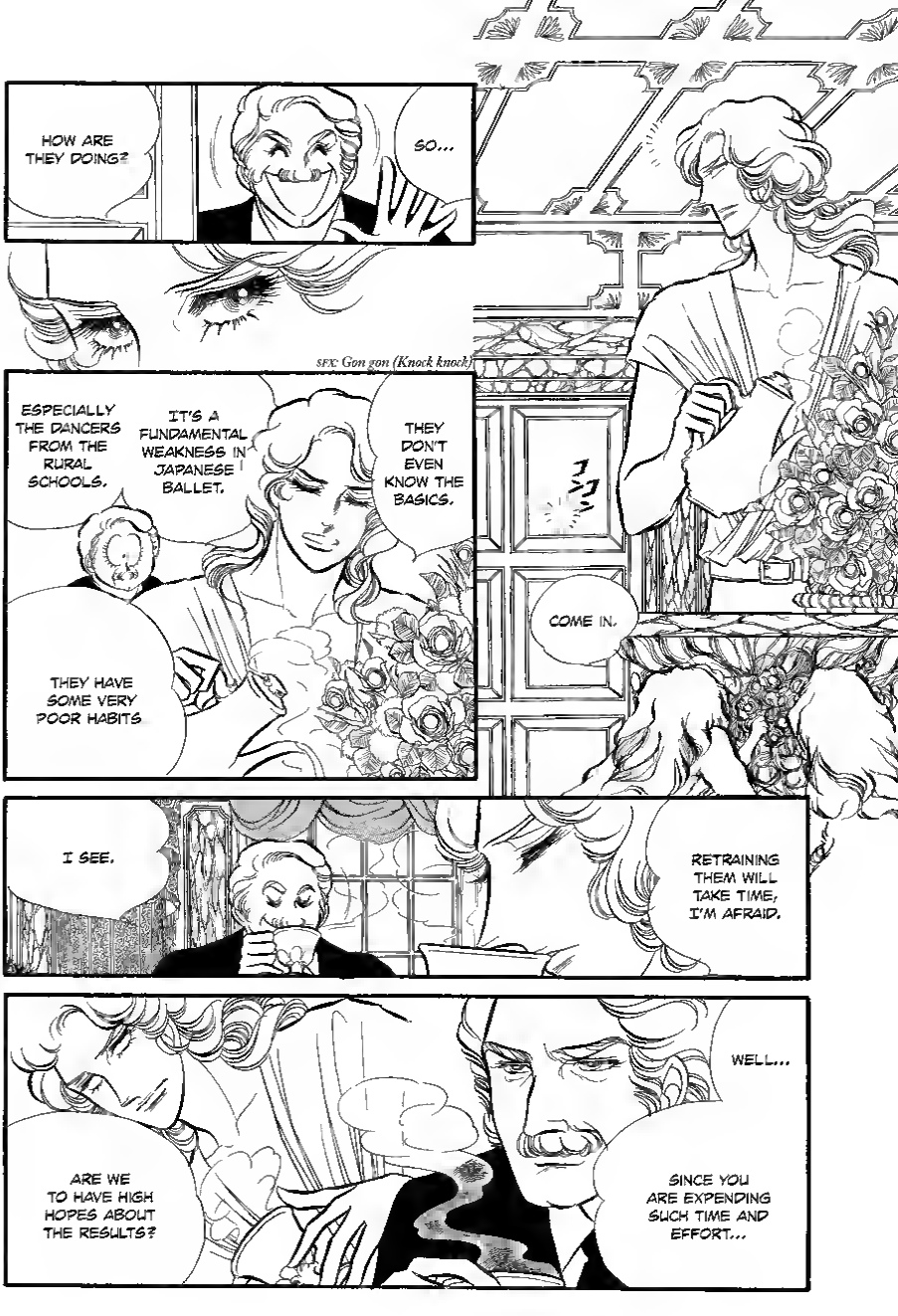
COME, HAVE A SEAT.
BUT FOR JAPAN, TWICE WEEKLY IS STANDARD.
SFX: Jitsu (Spark)
AN 8-MM FILM?
SFX: Shutsu (Shuff)
HE'S CLOSING THE CURTAINS!
EEP!
HOLY SMOKES... THIS FILM..!

SURELY EVEN YOU HAVE HEARD OF THESE DANCERS.
CRITICS AND INSTRUCTORS ALL OVER THE WORLD ARE TALKING ABOUT HOW THEY'LL REPLACE FONTEYN AS THE GREATEST DANCERS OF THEIR ERA.
Nadezhda Pavlova
Gelsey Kirkland
GELSEY KIRKLAND, THE PRIMA BALLERINA OF THE NEW YORK CITY BALLET!
AND THE 17-YEAR-OLD TO RECEIVE THE HIGHEST HONORS EVER AT THE SECOND INTERNATIONAL BALLET COMPETITION OF MOSCOW... NADEZHDA PAVLOVA!
YES... I KNOW HER!
SHE STARRED IN THE FILM *THE BLUE BIRD*.
THAT'S CORRECT.

THEY WERE BOTH BORN WITH BEAUTIFUL BODIES AND NATURAL TALENT.
BUT WHAT ALLOWS THEM TO EXPRESS THEIR FULL POTENTIAL WITH THESE GIFTS?
MASTERING THE BASICS THOUSANDS OF TIMES ALLOWS THEM TO FLOW FROM POSE TO POSE.
IT GIVES THEM THE GRACE AND CONFIDENCE TO PERFORM ON STAGE.
THE BASICS!
WITH SO MANY INTERNATIONAL COMPETITIONS THESE DAYS...
WHY DO YOU THINK JAPAN WINS SO FEW AWARDS?

SWAN
ARIYOSHI KYOKO
MARIS
SCANNER
MAYA PERRY (CMX)
TRANSLATOR
MARIS
PROOFREADER
MARIS
EDITOR
MARIS
QUALITY CONTROL
SHOUJO MANGA MANIAC
WWW.SHOUJO-MANGA.ORG

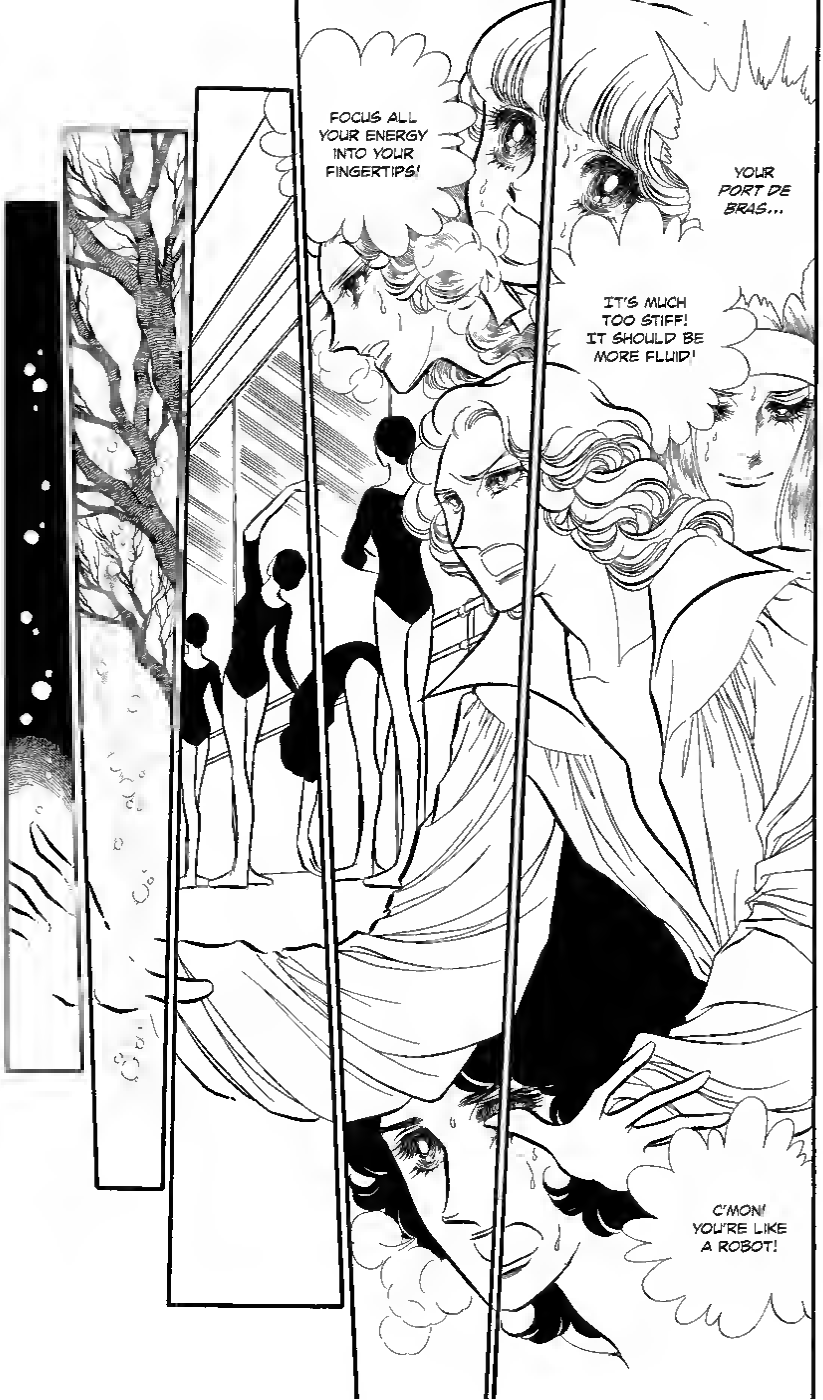

SFX: Batan (Slam)
SFX: Kacha (Click)
LET'S GO.
YEAH.
SERGEYEV-SENSEI..
I FEEL LIKE I JUST SAW...
WHAT MAKES HIM SUCH A GREAT TEACHER...


HOW ARE THEY DOING?
SO...
SFX: Gon gon (Knock knock)
ESPECIALLY THE DANCERS FROM THE RURAL SCHOOLS.
IT'S A FUNDAMENTAL WEAKNESS IN JAPANESE BALLET.
THEY DON'T EVEN KNOW THE BASICS.
THEY HAVE SOME VERY POOR HABITS
コンコン
COME IN.
I SEE.
RETRAINING THEM WILL TAKE TIME, I'M AFRAID.
WELL...
ARE WE TO HAVE HIGH HOPES ABOUT THE RESULTS?
SINCE YOU ARE EXPENDING SUCH TIME AND EFFORT...

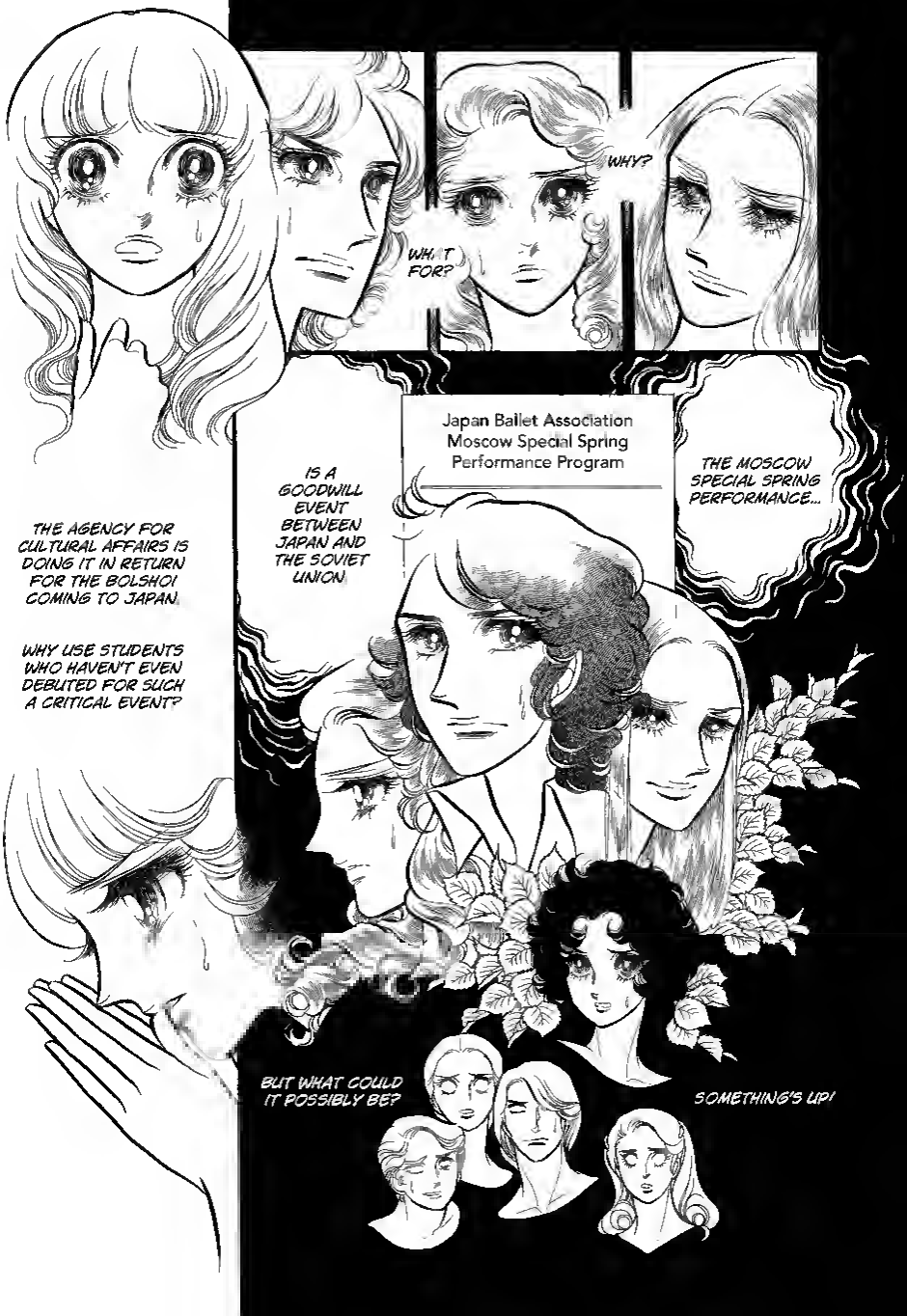
Mumble...
YES, OF COURSE
Oh.
WE'VE JUST GOTTEN STARTED.
CAN'T SAY JUST YET.
MASUMI-CHAN, OVER HERE!
HEY!
DON'T LOOK AT ME!
FROM A CERTAIN GLUTTON!
GOSH...
THEY'RE SO NICE..
I SAVED BOTH YOUR MEALS...
A THIRTY-MINUTE SCOLDING IS NOT ENOUGH.
SFX Boku (Jolt)
I TRAINED UNBELIEVABLY HARD TO WIN THESE SPECIAL LESSONS.
YOU GET A SPECIAL EXCEPTION TO GET IN...
AND STILL HAVE THE NERVE TO COMPLAIN!

IT'S SO COMPLETELY TRUE.
EVERYONE HERE... ALL OF THEM...
WHAT CAN I SAY?
IT'S OBVIOUS THEY WANT THESE LESSONS MORE THAN ANYTHING IN THE WORLD. THAT'S WHY THEY'RE LOOKING AT ME LIKE THAT.
DID YOU SEE OUR SCHEDULE?
NEXT WEEK IS GONNA BE A KILLER.
WE'LL NEED TO BE TOUGH.
STAMINA EQUALS ABILITY!
STRONG AS AN OX, YET GRACEFUL AS A SWAN! NOTHING IS AS HARSH AS THE WORLD OF BALLET!
ABSOLUTELY!
SEE YA LATER! GOTTA GO WORK OFF THIS BIG MEAL!
SEE YA!

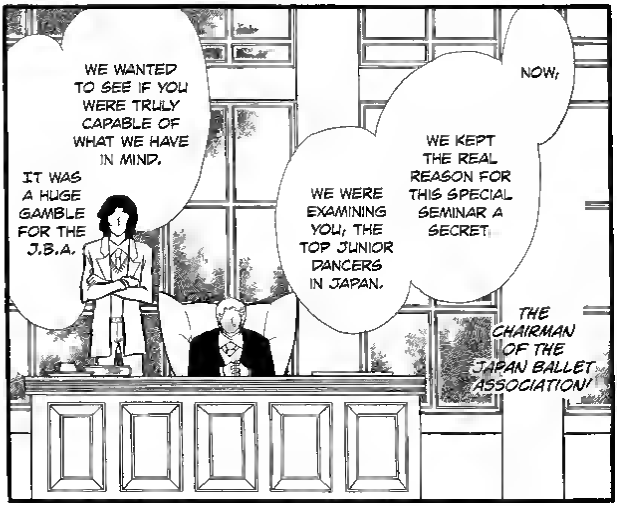
C'MON! HURRY UP AND EAT. WE GOTTA GO.
NO ONE WANTS TO REST FOR EVEN A MINUTE
OKAY.
I'LL TRY TO ABSORB EVERYTHING THEY TEACH ME!
IN JUST SIX MONTHS' TIME.
EVERYONE HERE IS TOP-NOTCH
SIX MONTHS WILL FLY BY
I'LL NEVER CATCH UP
BUT AT LEAST...

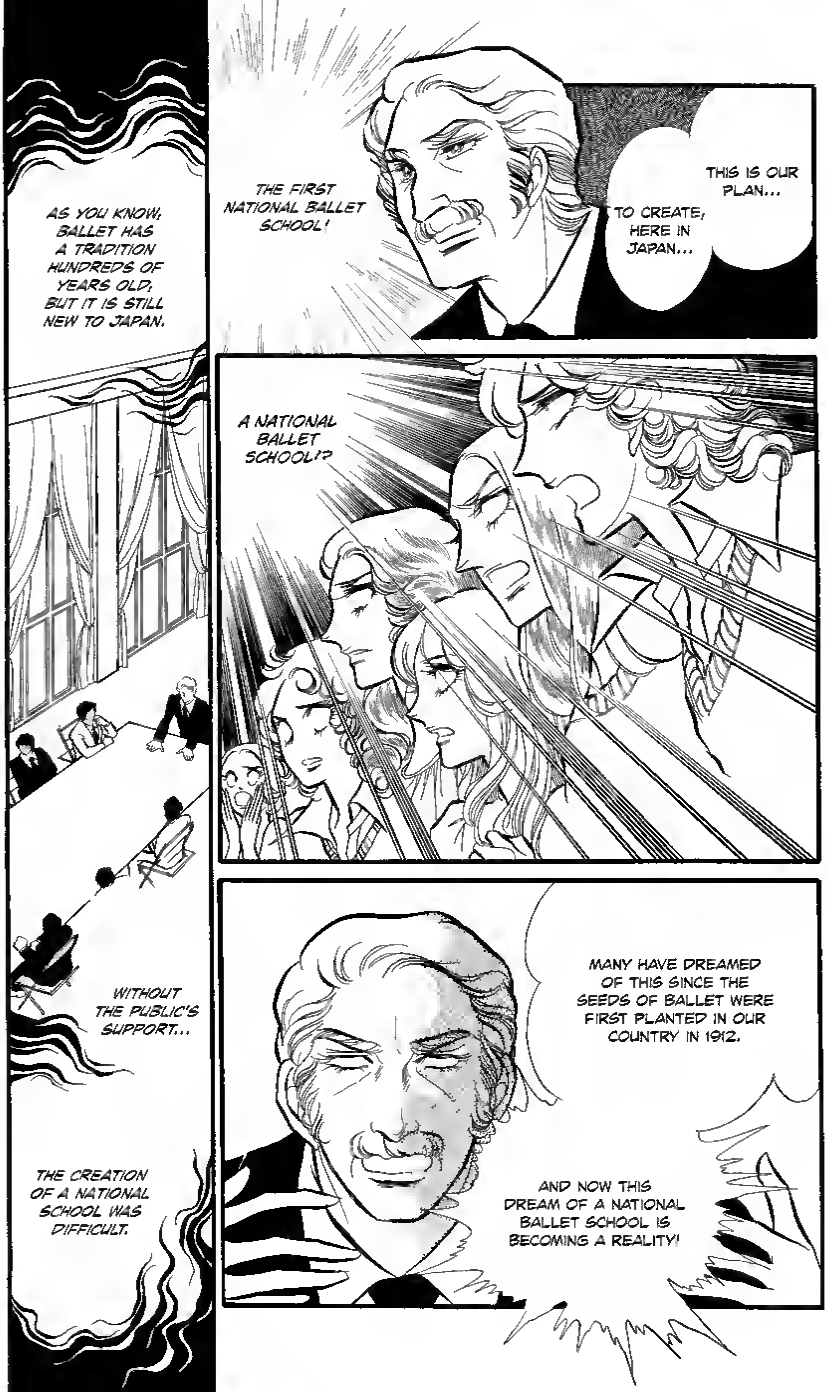

FOCUS ALL YOUR ENERGY INTO YOUR FINGERTIPS!
YOUR PORT DE BRAS...
IT'S MUCH TOO STIFF! IT SHOULD BE MORE FLUID!
C'MON! YOU'RE LIKE A ROBOT!

SFX: Ban (Bam)
MASUMI, WAKE UP! BIG NEWS!
Hm?
THEY POSTED AN ANNOUNCEMENT ON THE BULLETIN BOARD!
THREE OF US JAPANESE STUDENTS WILL BE GOING TO MOSCOW!
NO WAY!
Japan Ballet Association
Special Spring Performance in Moscow
Scheduled Performances
Sleeping Beauty
(Three scholarship students currently receiving private lessons will be chosen to perform!)
GOOD HEAVENS!
THREE STUDENTS...
THEY'RE CASTING THREE OF US?
SFX: Gaya gaya, wai wai (Chatter chatter)


WHY?
WHAT FOR?
Japan Ballet Association
Moscow Special Spring
Performance Program
THE MOSCOW SPECIAL SPRING PERFORMANCE...
IS A GOODWILL EVENT BETWEEN JAPAN AND THE SOVIET UNION
THE AGENCY FOR CULTURAL AFFAIRS IS DOING IT IN RETURN FOR THE BOLSHOI COMING TO JAPAN.
WHY USE STUDENTS WHO HAVEN'T EVEN DEBUTED FOR SUCH A CRITICAL EVENT?
BUT WHAT COULD IT POSSIBLY BE?
SOMETHING'S UP!

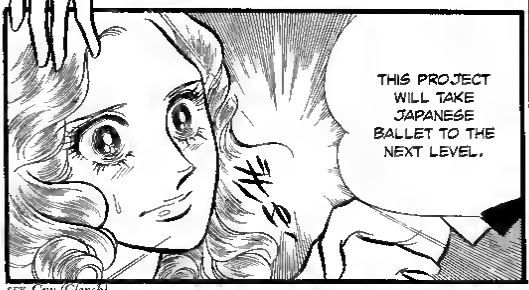
Meeting Room #3


WE WANTED TO SEE IF YOU WERE TRULY CAPABLE OF WHAT WE HAVE IN MIND.
IT WAS A HUGE GAMBLE FOR THE J.B.A.
WE WERE EXAMINING YOU, THE TOP JUNIOR DANCERS IN JAPAN.
NOW,
WE KEPT THE REAL REASON FOR THIS SPECIAL SEMINAR A SECRET.
THE CHAIRMAN OF THE JAPAN BALLET ASSOCIATION!

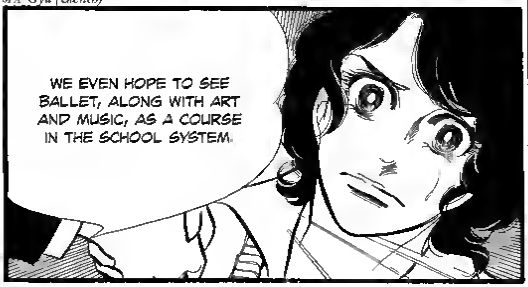

AS YOU KNOW, BALLET HAS A TRADITION HUNDREDS OF YEARS OLD, BUT IT IS STILL NEW TO JAPAN.
THE FIRST NATIONAL BALLET SCHOOL!
THIS IS OUR PLAN...
TO CREATE, HERE IN JAPAN...
A NATIONAL BALLET SCHOOL!?
WITHOUT THE PUBLIC'S SUPPORT...
THE CREATION OF A NATIONAL SCHOOL WAS DIFFICULT.
MANY HAVE DREAMED OF THIS SINCE THE SEEDS OF BALLET WERE FIRST PLANTED IN OUR COUNTRY IN 1912.
AND NOW THIS DREAM OF A NATIONAL BALLET SCHOOL IS BECOMING A REALITY!

EVEN IF WE BUILD A SCHOOL, WITHOUT EXCEPTIONAL STUDENTS, IT IS MEANINGLESS.
BUT THE TIME HAS COME FOR US TO MOVE FORWARD.
AND AS YOU SAW IN THE ANNOUNCEMENT, THREE OF YOU WILL BE GOING TO MOSCOW TO PROVE OUR CAPABILITIES...
YOU NINE STUDENTS HERE ARE THE FIRST CLASS OF THE JAPANESE NATIONAL BALLET SCHOOL!
SOME SAID THAT THE CREATION OF SUCH A PLACE WOULD BE A WASTE OF TIME AND MONEY.
BUT JAPAN CAN NOW BE WORLD-CLASS, THANKS TO YOU!
AND REMAIN THERE, TO ATTEND THE MOSCOW BALLET SCHOOL!
THE MOSCOW BALLET SCHOOL!?

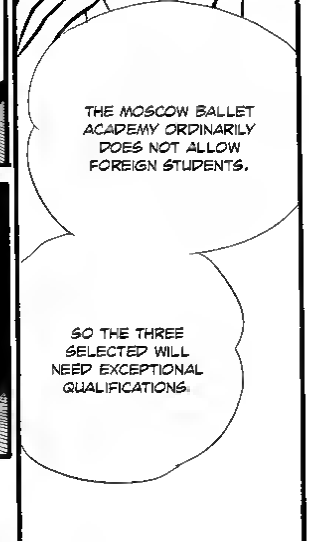
YOU HAVE BEEN SELECTED FROM A COMPETITION OF OVER 130 PARTICIPANTS.
WE HAVE EVERY EXPECTATION THAT YOU WILL LIVE UP TO OUR HOPES.



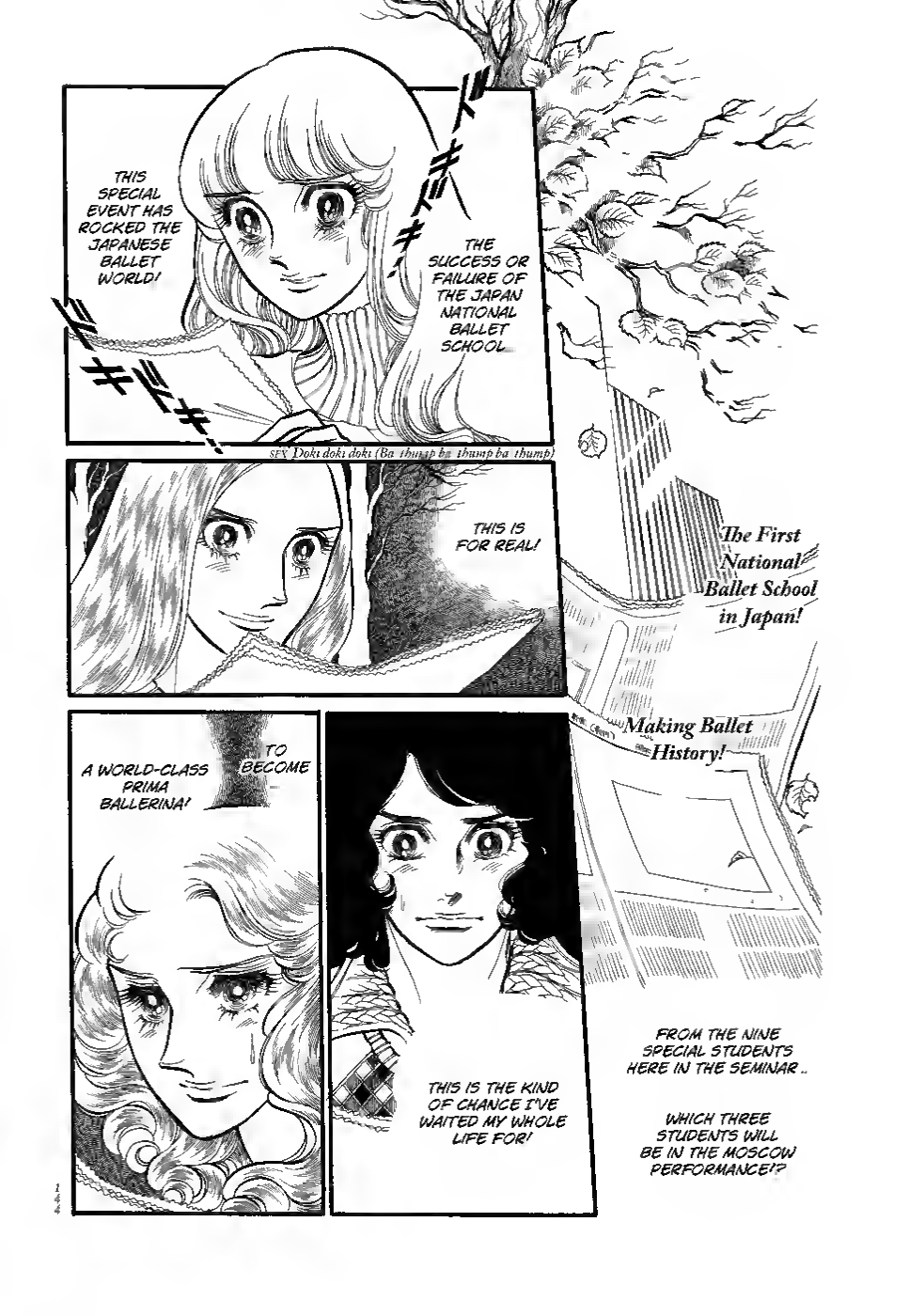
SFX: Gyu (Clench)

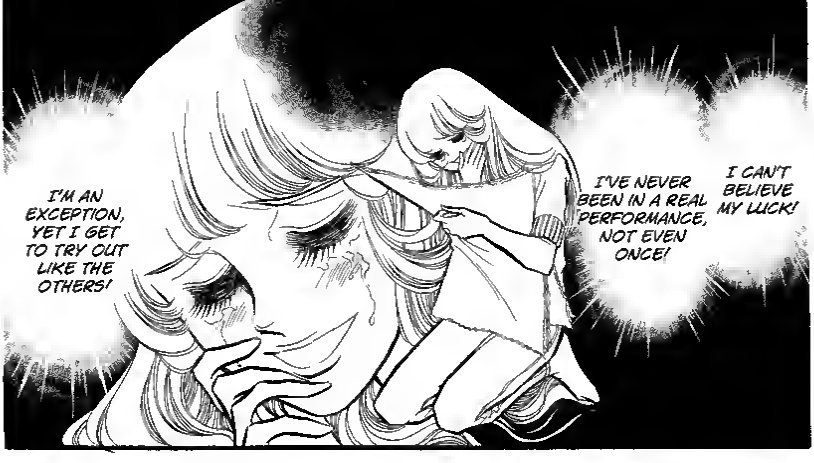


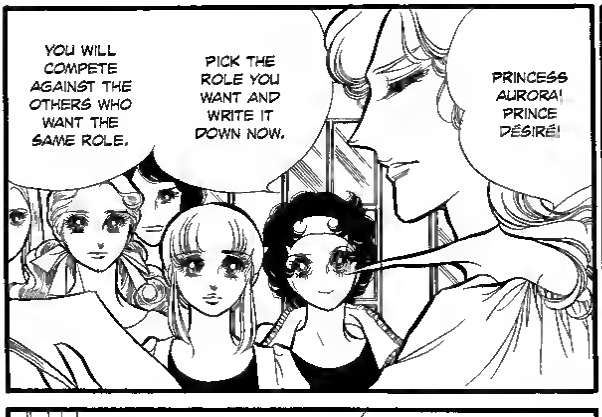
WHAT?
MOSCOW AND LENINGRAD HAVE THE MOST PRESTIGIOUS BALLET SCHOOLS IN RUSSIA, MAYBE IN THE WORLD!
THEY'RE THE BEST!
WHY US?
I DON'T BELIEVE THIS!

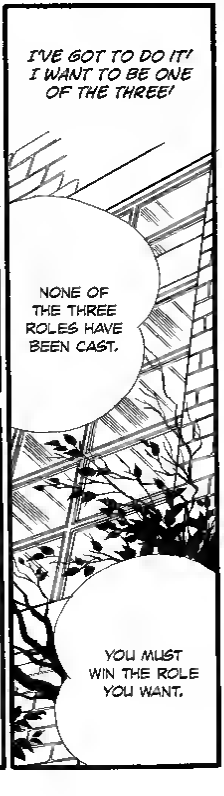

THE MOSCOW BALLET ACADEMY ORDINARILY DOES NOT ALLOW FOREIGN STUDENTS.
SO THE THREE SELECTED WILL NEED EXCEPTIONAL QUALIFICATIONS.

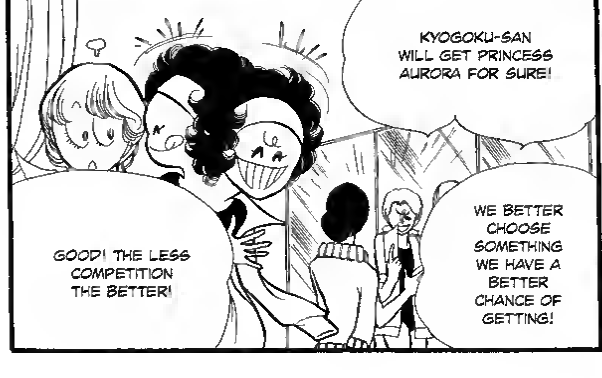
WE'RE COUNTING ON YOU!
ON YOUR YOUTH, YOUR POTENTIAL, AND YOUR PASSION FOR BALLET!
OUR GOALS ARE WITHIN REACH.
JAPAN NEEDS YOU TO REPRESENT US AS OUR FINEST JUNIOR DANCERS!
YOUR GOAL IS THE WORLD STAGE!
YOUR MISSION IS...
TO GO TO MOSCOW TO STUDY...
AND LEARN FROM THE BEST IN THE WORLD!


THIS SPECIAL EVENT HAS ROCKED THE JAPANESE BALLET WORLD!
THE SUCCESS OR FAILURE OF THE JAPAN NATIONAL BALLET SCHOOL
SFX Doki doki doki (Ba thump ba thump ba thump)
THIS IS FOR REAL!
The First National Ballet School in Japan!
Making Ballet History!
TO BECOME A WORLD-CLASS PRIMA BALLERINA!
THIS IS THE KIND OF CHANCE I'VE WAITED MY WHOLE LIFE FOR!
FROM THE NINE SPECIAL STUDENTS HERE IN THE SEMINAR..
WHICH THREE STUDENTS WILL BE IN THE MOSCOW PERFORMANCE!?


I'M AN EXCEPTION, YET I GET TO TRY OUT LIKE THE OTHERS!
I'VE NEVER BEEN IN A REAL PERFORMANCE, NOT EVEN ONCE!
I CAN'T BELIEVE MY LUCK!


YOU WILL COMPETE AGAINST THE OTHERS WHO WANT THE SAME ROLE.
PICK THE ROLE YOU WANT AND WRITE IT DOWN NOW.
PRINCESS AURORA! PRINCE DÉSIRÉ!

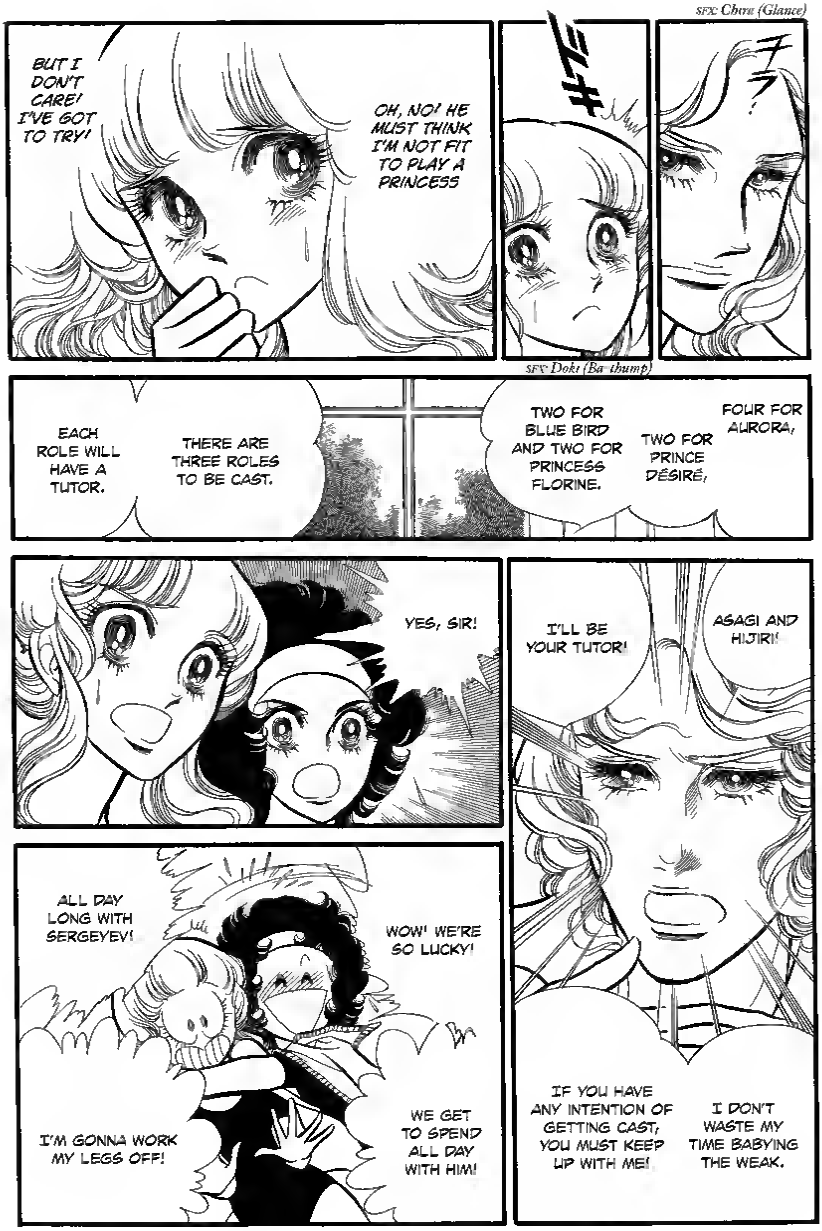

I'VE GOT TO DO IT! I WANT TO BE ONE OF THE THREE!
NONE OF THE THREE ROLES HAVE BEEN CAST.
YOU MUST WIN THE ROLE YOU WANT.


KYOGOKU-SAN WILL GET PRINCESS AURORA FOR SURE!
GOOD! THE LESS COMPETITION THE BETTER!
WE BETTER CHOOSE SOMETHING WE HAVE A BETTER CHANCE OF GETTING!

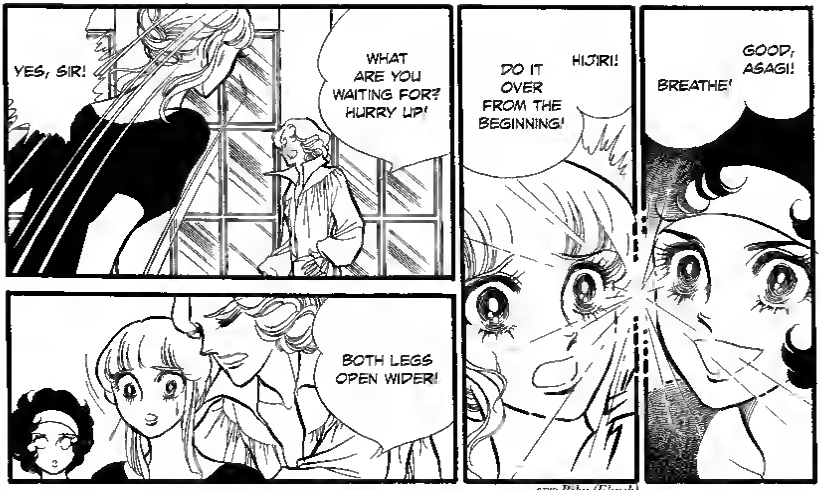
OF COURSE! I WANNA BE PRINCESS AURORA!
DO YOU MEAN...?
IF I'M GONNA DO IT, MIGHT AS WELL GO FOR THE BEST ROLE!
I...
SHE'S SO CONFIDENT!
BUT I WANT TO WIN!
I COULDN'T POSSIBLY
HMMM...
I want to play Princess Aurora.

SFX: Para (Flip)

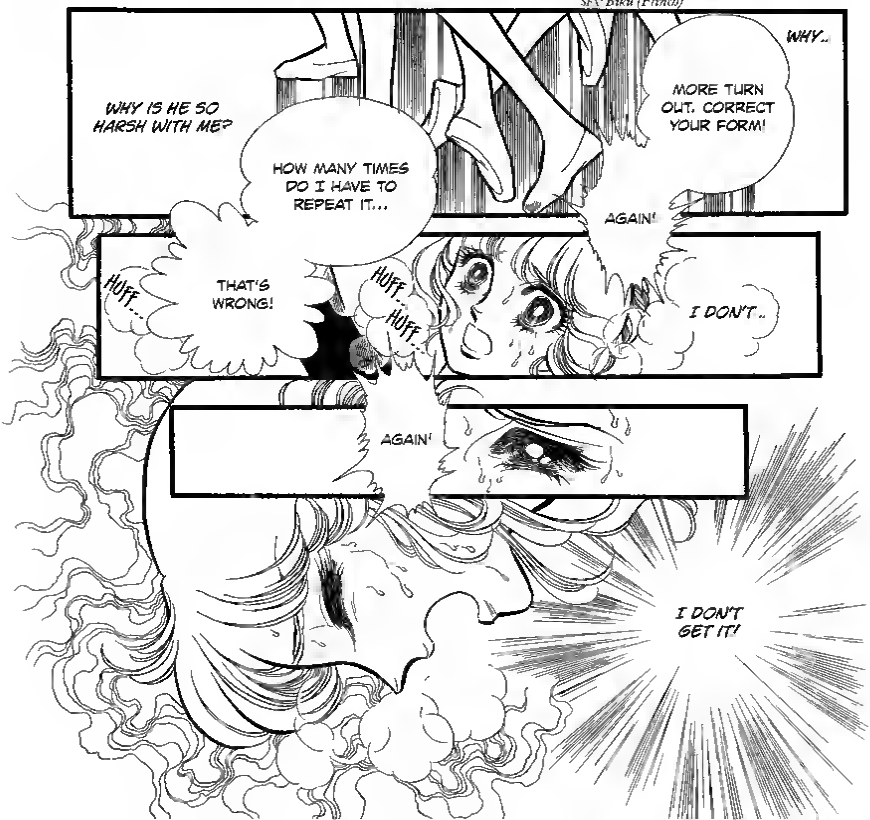
SFX: Sara sara (Scritch scritch)

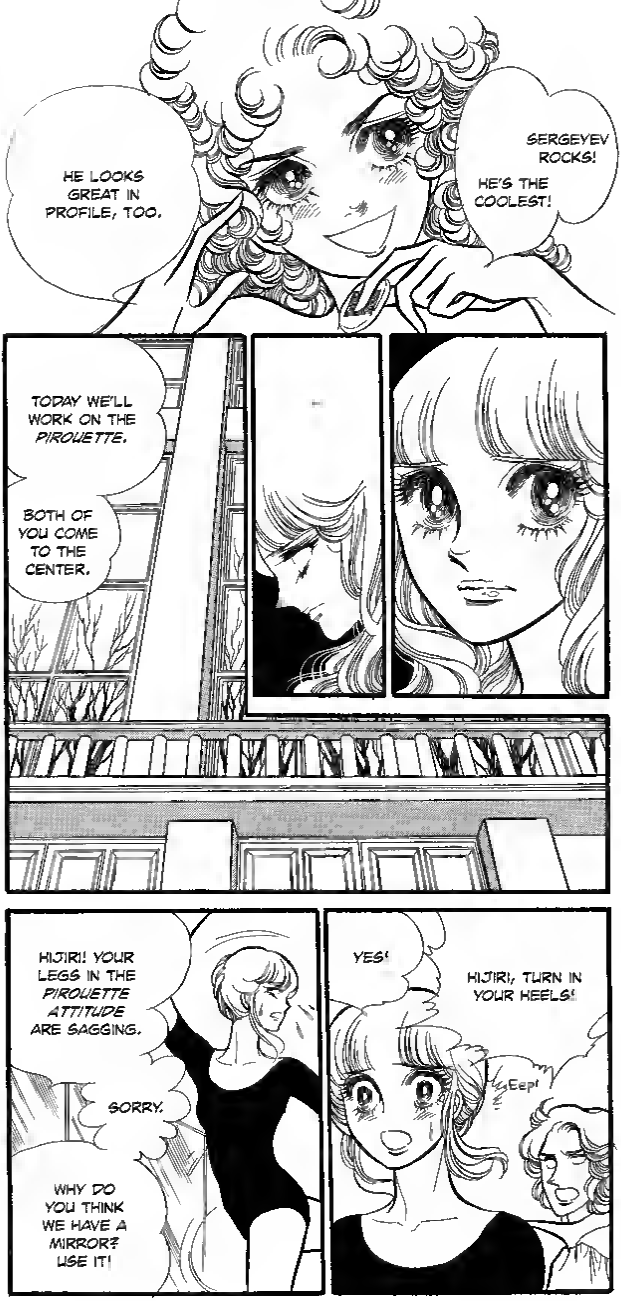

SFX: Chira (Glance)
BUT I DON'T CARE! I'VE GOT TO TRY!
OH, NO! HE MUST THINK I'M NOT FIT TO PLAY A PRINCESS
ラブ
チラ
SFX: Doki (Ba-thump)
EACH ROLE WILL HAVE A TUTOR.
THERE ARE THREE ROLES TO BE CAST.
TWO FOR BLUE BIRD AND TWO FOR PRINCESS FLORINE.
TWO FOR PRINCE DÉSIRÉ,
FOUR FOR AURORA,
YES, SIR!
I'LL BE YOUR TUTOR!
ASAGI AND HIJIRI!
ALL DAY LONG WITH SERGEYEV!
WOW! WE'RE SO LUCKY!
I'M GONNA WORK MY LEGS OFF!
WE GET TO SPEND ALL DAY WITH HIM!
IF YOU HAVE ANY INTENTION OF GETTING CAST, YOU MUST KEEP UP WITH ME!
I DON'T WASTE MY TIME BABYING THE WEAK.

Princess Aurora is cursed by a wicked fairy, Carabosse, and falls into a deep sleep, but she is awakened with a kiss from Prince Désiré.
The Sleeping Beauty is a three-act ballet created in 1890 based on the story by Charles Perrault. First performed in St Petersburg, Russia the music was written by Tchaikovsky.
The wedding scene of Act III is filled with many magnificent *pas de deux*, such as the Blue Bird, Red Riding Hood and the Wolf, and Cinderella and Her Prince.
Grande Rond de Jambe
FIRST, YOU MUST INTERPRET THE ROLE.
SHOW ME A *GRANDE ROND DE JAMBE*.
SURE!

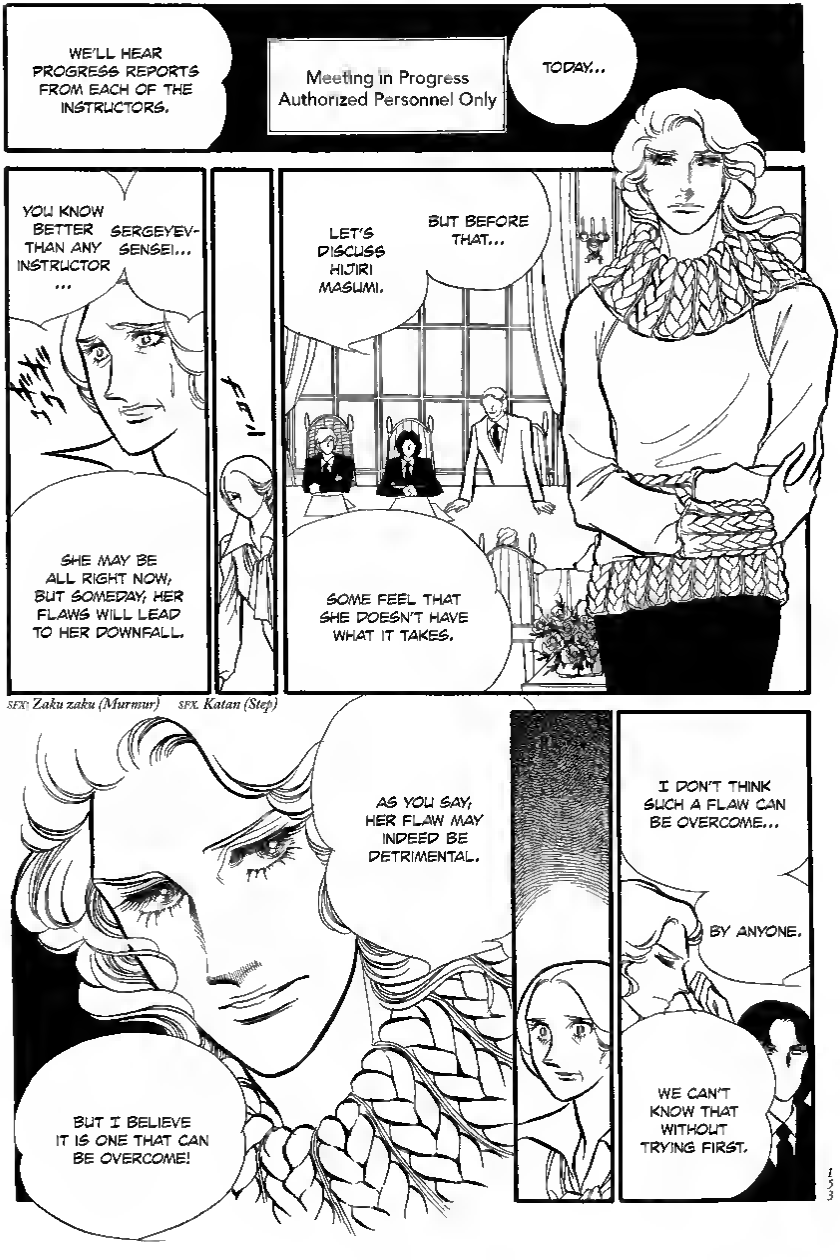


SFX: Biku (Flinch)




HE LOOKS GREAT IN PROFILE, TOO.
SERGEYEV ROCKS! HE'S THE COOLEST!
TODAY WE'LL WORK ON THE *PIROUETTE*.
BOTH OF YOU COME TO THE CENTER.
HIJIRI! YOUR LEGS IN THE *PIROUETTE ATTITUDE* ARE SAGGING.
SORRY.
WHY DO YOU THINK WE HAVE A MIRROR? USE IT!
YES!
HIJIRI, TURN IN YOUR HEELS!
Eep!

MY HEAD KNOWS WHAT TO DO..
BUT MY BODY WON'T COOPERATE...
WHY CAN'T I MAKE MY BODY DO WHAT HE'S SAYING?
WHY!? WHY!?
WHY WON'T MY BODY LISTEN?
HUFF.. HUFF.. HUFF..
STILL TRAINING? THIS LATE?


WE'LL HEAR PROGRESS REPORTS FROM EACH OF THE INSTRUCTORS.
Meeting in Progress
Authorized Personnel Only
TODAY...
YOU KNOW BETTER THAN ANY INSTRUCTOR ...
SERGEYEV-SENSEI...
SHE MAY BE ALL RIGHT NOW, BUT SOMEDAY, HER FLAWS WILL LEAD TO HER DOWNFALL.
Fsh
LET'S DISCUSS HIJIRI MASUMI.
BUT BEFORE THAT...
SOME FEEL THAT SHE DOESN'T HAVE WHAT IT TAKES.
SFX: Zaku zaku (Murmur)
SFX: Katan (Step)
AS YOU SAY, HER FLAW MAY INDEED BE DETRIMENTAL.
BUT I BELIEVE IT IS ONE THAT CAN BE OVERCOME!
I DON'T THINK SUCH A FLAW CAN BE OVERCOME...
BY ANYONE.
WE CAN'T KNOW THAT WITHOUT TRYING FIRST.

HUFF... HUFF...
AND EVERYTHING SERGEYEV-SENSEI TEACHES, YUKA ABSORBS SO QUICKLY!
UGH!
THE HARDER I TRY, THE WORSE IT GETS!
I CAN'T KEEP UP.
WHY DOES HE...
ALWAYS SCOLD ME?
I'M SO CONFUSED.
WHAT'S GOING ON?
WHAT AM I... DOING WRONG?

THOSE TWO ARE STILL AT IT.
NEXT WEEK THEY COMPETE TO SEE WHO GETS THE PART.
BUT THEY'RE STILL GETTING CORRECTED ON THE SAME PLACE!
I GUESS WE ALREADY KNOW WHO'LL WIN!
AURORA IS OUT OF THEIR LEAGUE!
OH...!
IT'S HER TRAINING...
IT SEEMS LIKE HER PAST TRAINING WAS FUNDAMENTALLY FLAWED.

SFX. Gyu (Clench)

I WANT...
I WANT TO BE GOOD.
...
SENSEI, PLEASE ...
I KNOW THAT I ONLY GOT IN HERE AS AN EXCEPTION.
I'M THE WORST ONE HERE, AND DESERVE EVERY SCOLDING.
BUT... STILL...
I WANT TO GO TO MOSCOW NO MATTER WHAT!

PLEASE...
PLEASE, SIR!
TEACH ME! TELL ME WHAT TO DO!
IF YOU WHOLE-HEARTEDLY DESIRE YOUR GOAL, YOU'LL ALWAYS FIND A WAY.
WHATEVER YOUR OBSTACLES, WHATEVER YOUR FLAWS...
HOW CAN I SURMOUNT THESE OBSTACLES?
I'LL DO ANYTHING! I'LL TRAIN AS HARD AS YOU WANT ME TO!
YOU MUST FORGET EVERYTHING YOU LEARNED SO FAR...
AND RELEARN THE BASICS.
HOWEVER...
IT'S UP TO YOU TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF IT.

SFX: Biku (Flinch)

GET THIS!

I... KNOW.

BUT... THERE'S NO TIME.

CORRECTING FLAWS TAKES TIME AND EFFORT!

THERE ARE NO SHORTCUTS!

IT'S THE CRUX OF BALLET.

EN DEHORS. TURNING OUT FULLY FROM THE LEG JOINTS.

LOOK HERE.

The *en dehors* position causes the thigh bone to retract, allowing the leg to be raised higher, from 90 degrees to 135 degrees

Développé à la seconde

En dehors position

Normal human posture

IT TAKES YEARS OF DISCIPLINED TRAINING TO TEACH THE BODY THIS POSTURE AND BECOME A GRACEFUL DANCER!

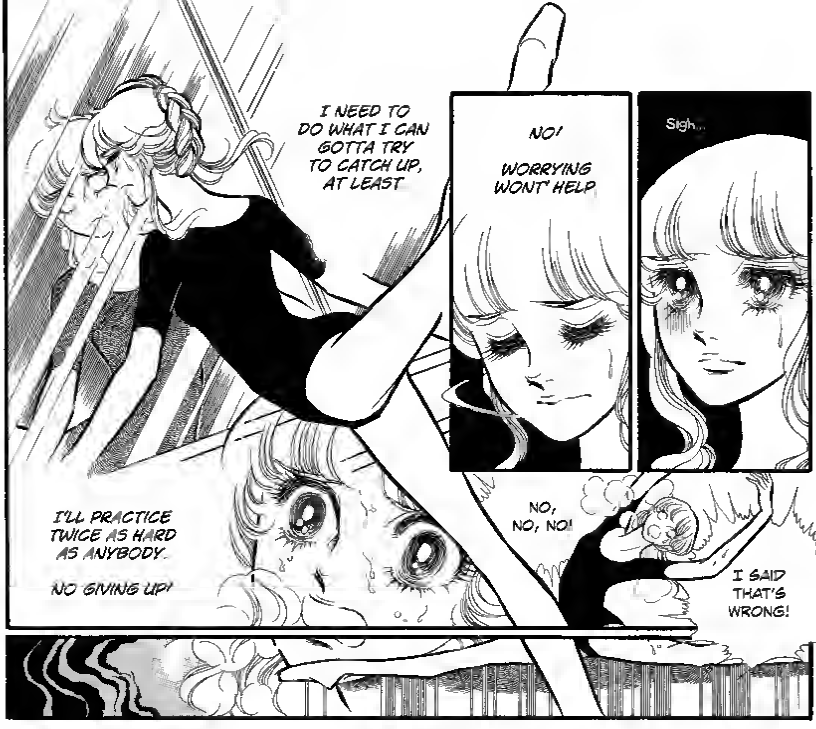
BUT IN ORDER TO MASTER THIS COMPLETELY UNNATURAL POSITION AND DANCE FROM IT...?

AT A GLANCE IT LOOKS EASY.

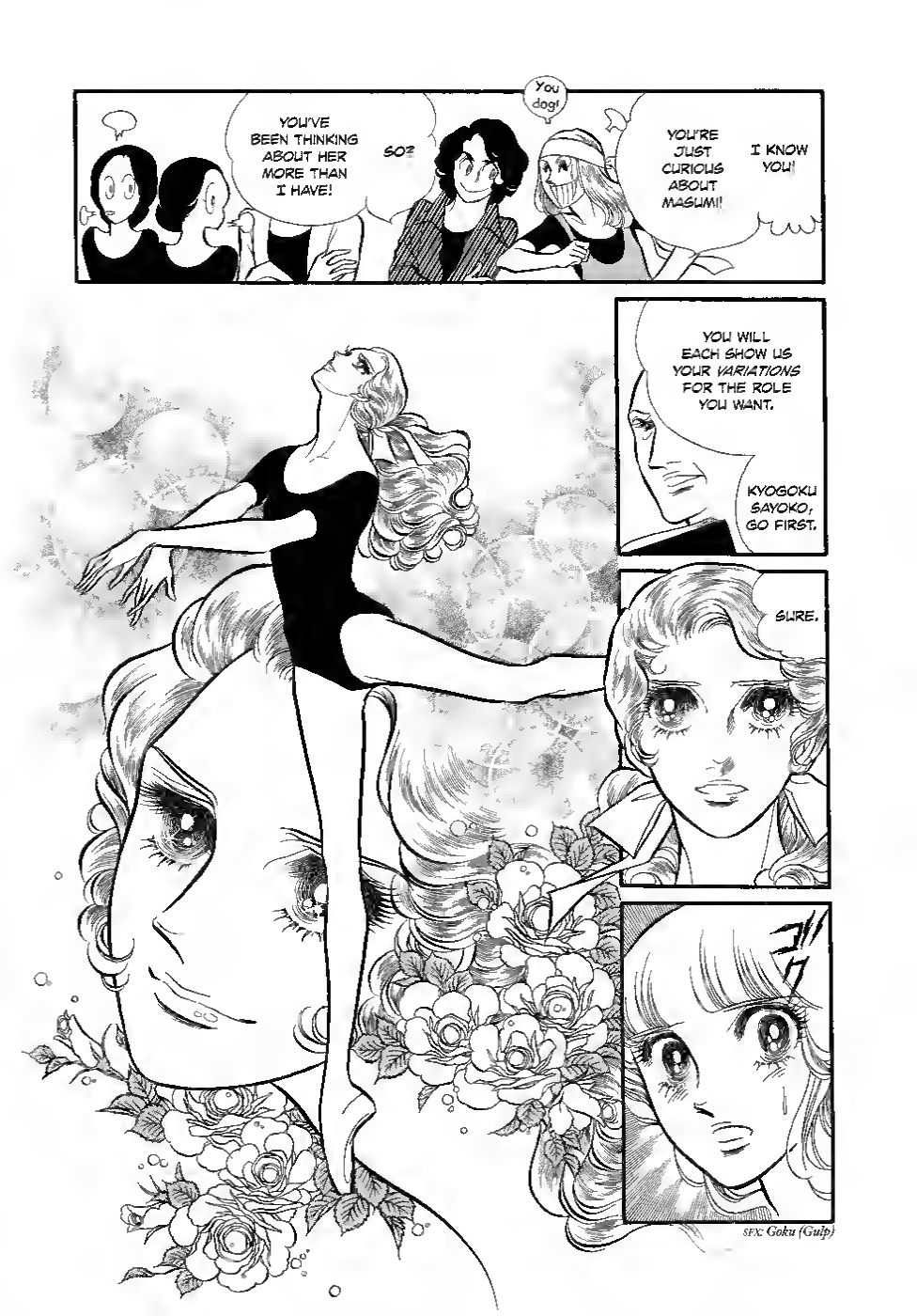
YOU MUST MASTER THIS!
OF COURSE IT TAKES TIME AND EFFORT TO TRAIN THE FUNDAMENTALS.
IT'S THE SAME FOR PAINTERS WHO KEEP PAINTING WITHOUT LEARNING THE BASICS OF DESIGN.
BUT WITHOUT MASTERING THE BASICS SOME DAY THEY WILL STOP GROWING!
YOU HAVE SO MANY BAD HABITS TO UNLEARN.
YOU HAVEN'T EVEN BEGUN!
OH!
HER PAST TRAINING WAS FUNDAMENTALLY FLAWED.
SO I WILL FIX THAT FLAW!
YOU BEGGED FOR MY HELP.
YOUR PAST TRAINING WAS BASED ON POOR TECHNIQUE.
IT'S LIKE A STACK OF BOXES, PILED TOO HIGH AND ABOUT TO FALL.

PLEASE!
YES, SIR!
YES!
HIJIRI,
CONTINUE THE BASICS.
LET'S SEE THE AURORA *VARIATION* FROM ACT III.

TAKE IT FROM THE TOP.
YES.
HURRY, ASAGI!
GOOD. SOFTER.
NO TIME FOR ENVY! SOMEDAY I'LL BE ABLE TO TRAIN LIKE THAT!
JUST THE BASICS, BY HERSELF?
BUT.
THERE ARE NO SHORTCUTS!
DOES THAT MEAN I WON'T MAKE IT TO MOSCOW?

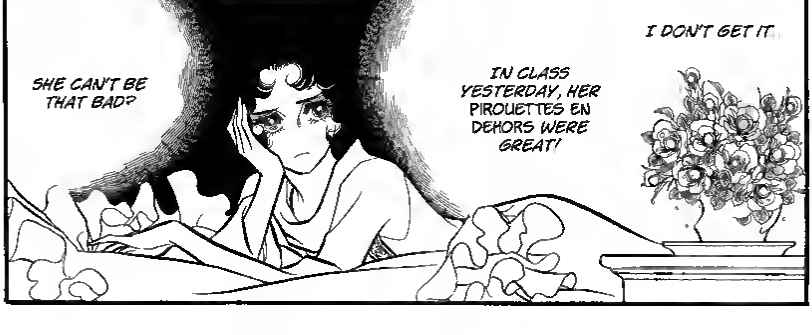

I NEED TO DO WHAT I CAN GOTTA TRY TO CATCH UP, AT LEAST
NO! WORRYING WONT' HELP
Sigh...
I'LL PRACTICE TWICE AS HARD AS ANYBODY.
NO GIVING UP!
NO, NO, NO!
I SAID THAT'S WRONG!

SFX. Zawa zawa (Chatter chatter)
EVERYONE'S BEEN PRACTICING IN DIFFERENT ROOMS.
CAN'T WAIT TO SEE THE RESULTS OF THOSE PRIVATE LESSONS!
PHEW.
THIS AFTERNOON WE FINALLY HAVE GROUP CLASS.

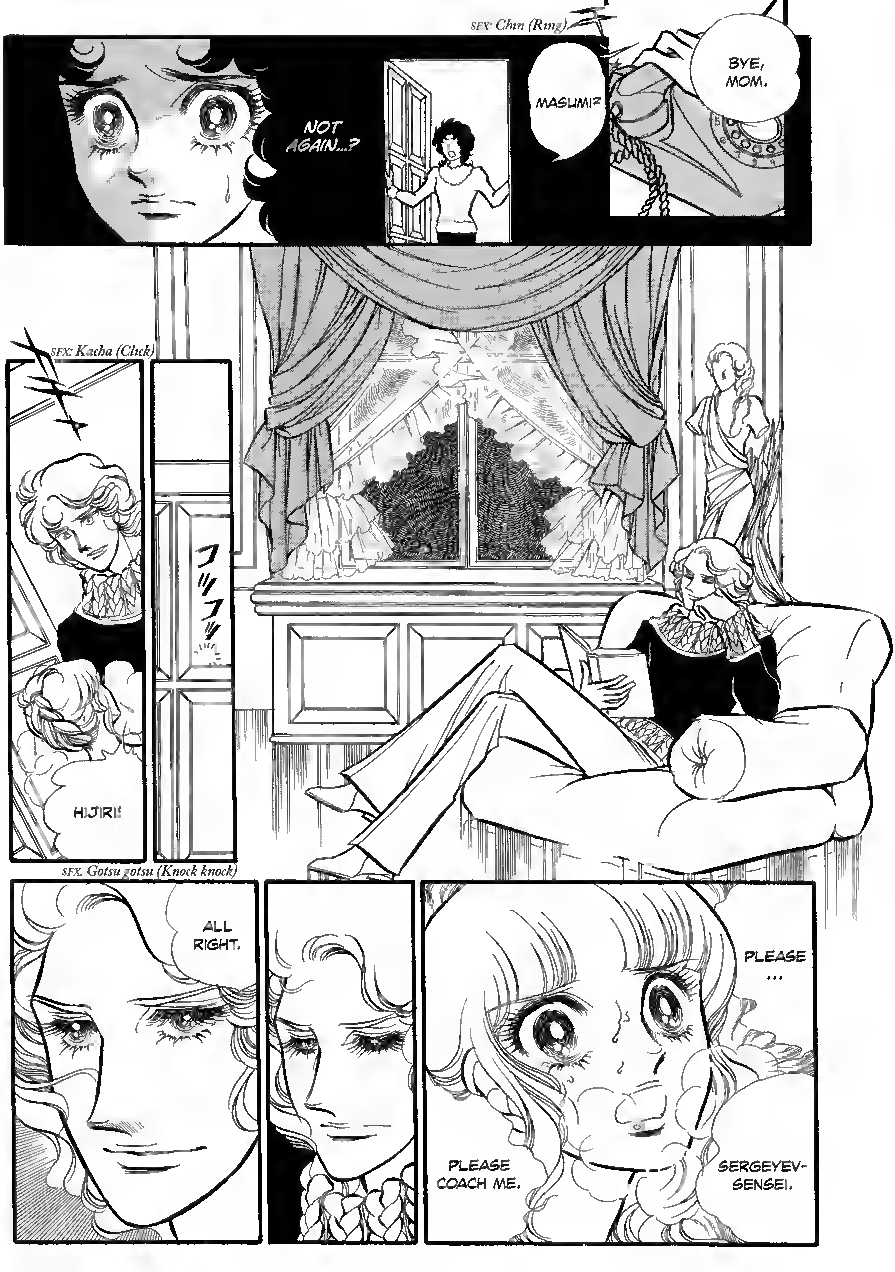

You dog!
YOU'VE BEEN THINKING ABOUT HER MORE THAN I HAVE!
SO?
YOU'RE JUST CURIOUS ABOUT MASUMI!
I KNOW YOU!
YOU WILL EACH SHOW US YOUR VARIATIONS FOR THE ROLE YOU WANT.
KYOGOKU SAYOKO, GO FIRST.
SURE.
SFX: Goku (Gulp)

SO FLOWING AND MUSICAL.
IT'S SO BEAUTIFUL! EVERY POSE... PERFECT!
TO MOVE WITH THAT GRACE!
I WANT TO DANCE LIKE THAT!
TO SHINE SO BRILLIANTLY!
RIGHT AFTER KYOGOKU-SAN?
YES!
WAIT.
I MUST TRAIN HARDER!
HER CONFIDENCE AND APTITUDE...
NEXT, HIJIRI MASUMI.
COME FROM THE BASICS
HER TECHNIQUE STILL NEEDS REFINING.
SHE'S NOT READY TO DANCE YET.

I SEE... ALL RIGHT THEN.
NEXT, ASAGI YUKA.
HOW EMBARASSING!
I'M HOPELESS

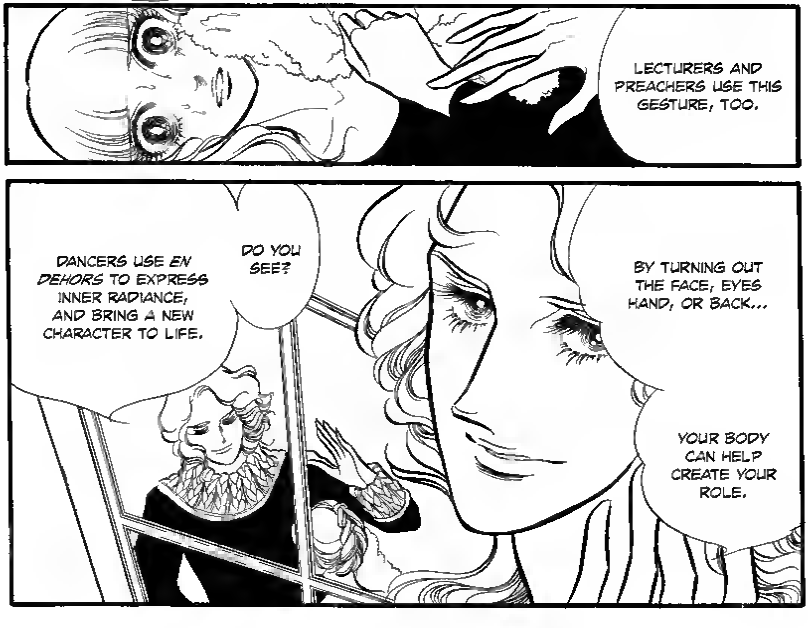

I DON'T GET IT
IN CLASS YESTERDAY, HER PIROUETTES EN DEHORS WERE GREAT!
SHE CAN'T BE THAT BAD?

SFX: Katha (Click)
MY MOM SENT CAKE. HAVE YOU HAD A BATH?
ALONE?
WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN AT A TIME LIKE THIS?
MASUMI!
I DON'T GET IT.
THESE TOE SHOES WERE NEW!
OH, MY...!
YOU'VE WORN THEM OUT ALREADY!?
IN THE PRACTICE HALL.
OHH ...
I'M BACK
ZZZ...
ZZZ...
WHAT THE...?
I'VE GOT QUITE A FEW RIVALS!
...
YEAH, MOM...
DON'T KNOW WHO'S GOING TO MOSCOW YET.


SFX: Chin (Ring)
NOT AGAIN...?
MASUMI?
BYE, MOM.
SFX: Kacha (Click)
コツコツ
HIJIRI!
SFX: Gotsu gotsu (Knock knock)
ALL RIGHT.
PLEASE ...
PLEASE COACH ME.
SERGEYEV-SENSEI.

PASSÉ.
EFFACÉ ATTITUDE.
EFFACÉ DEVANT.
STRETCH YOUR BODY UPWARD!
AND NOW ATTITUDE CROISÉ.
FINE.
THAT'S ENOUGH.
OKAY.
EN DEHORS ... IS ABOUT "OUTWARD EXPRESSION."
HUFF... HUFF...
HMM?

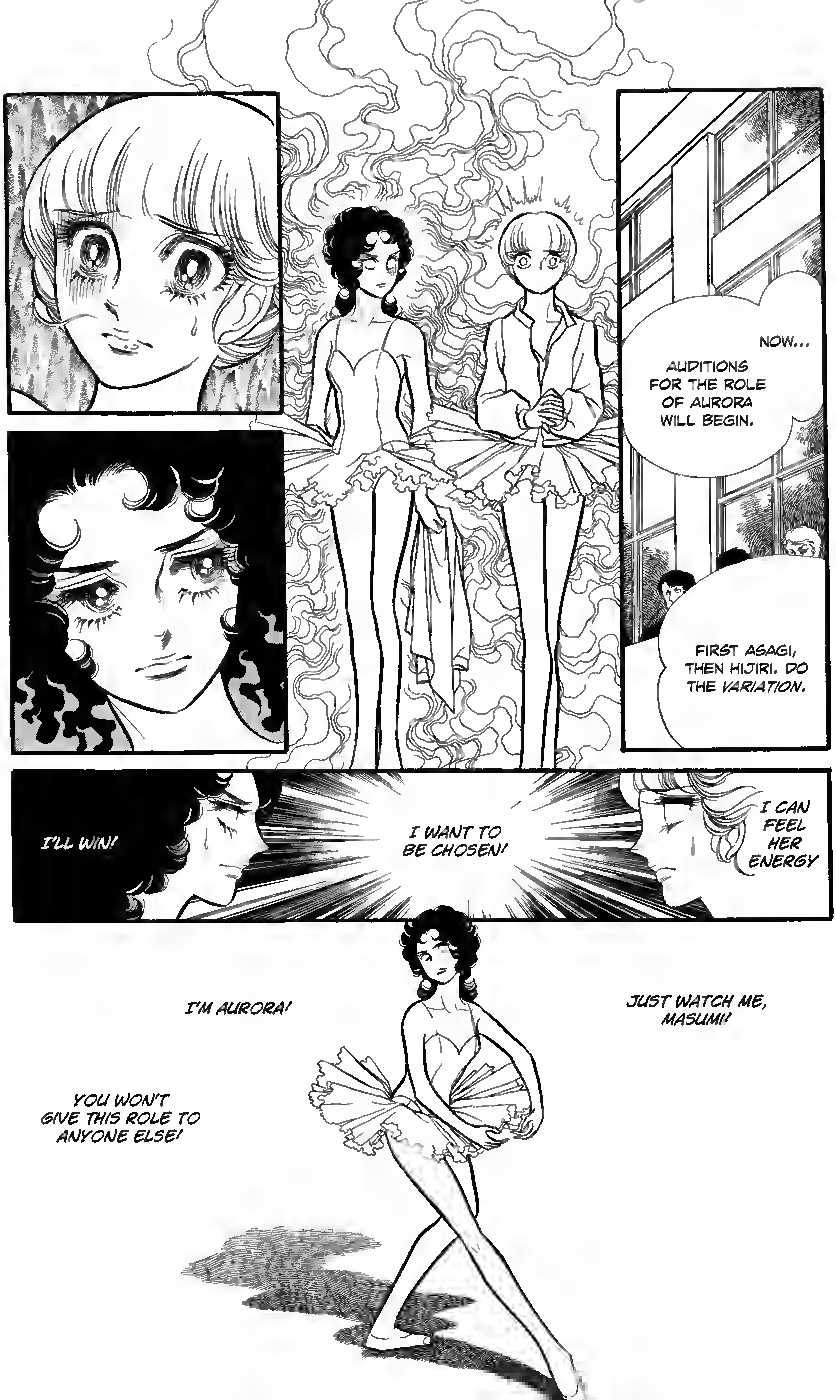
FOR EXAMPLE, TURNING THE HANDS OUT...
SHOWING THE PALMS, WHICH ARE USUALLY HIDDEN, GIVES A SENSE OF WARMTH...
AND HENCE IT EXPRESSES SWEETNESS, HAPPINESS... SOMETHING NEW.
JESUS IS THAT WAY IN DA VINCI'S PAINTING, "THE LAST SUPPER."


LECTURERS AND PREACHERS USE THIS GESTURE, TOO.
BY TURNING OUT THE FACE, EYES HAND, OR BACK...
DO YOU SEE?
DANCERS USE *EN DEHORS* TO EXPRESS INNER RADIANCE, AND BRING A NEW CHARACTER TO LIFE.
YOUR BODY CAN HELP CREATE YOUR ROLE.

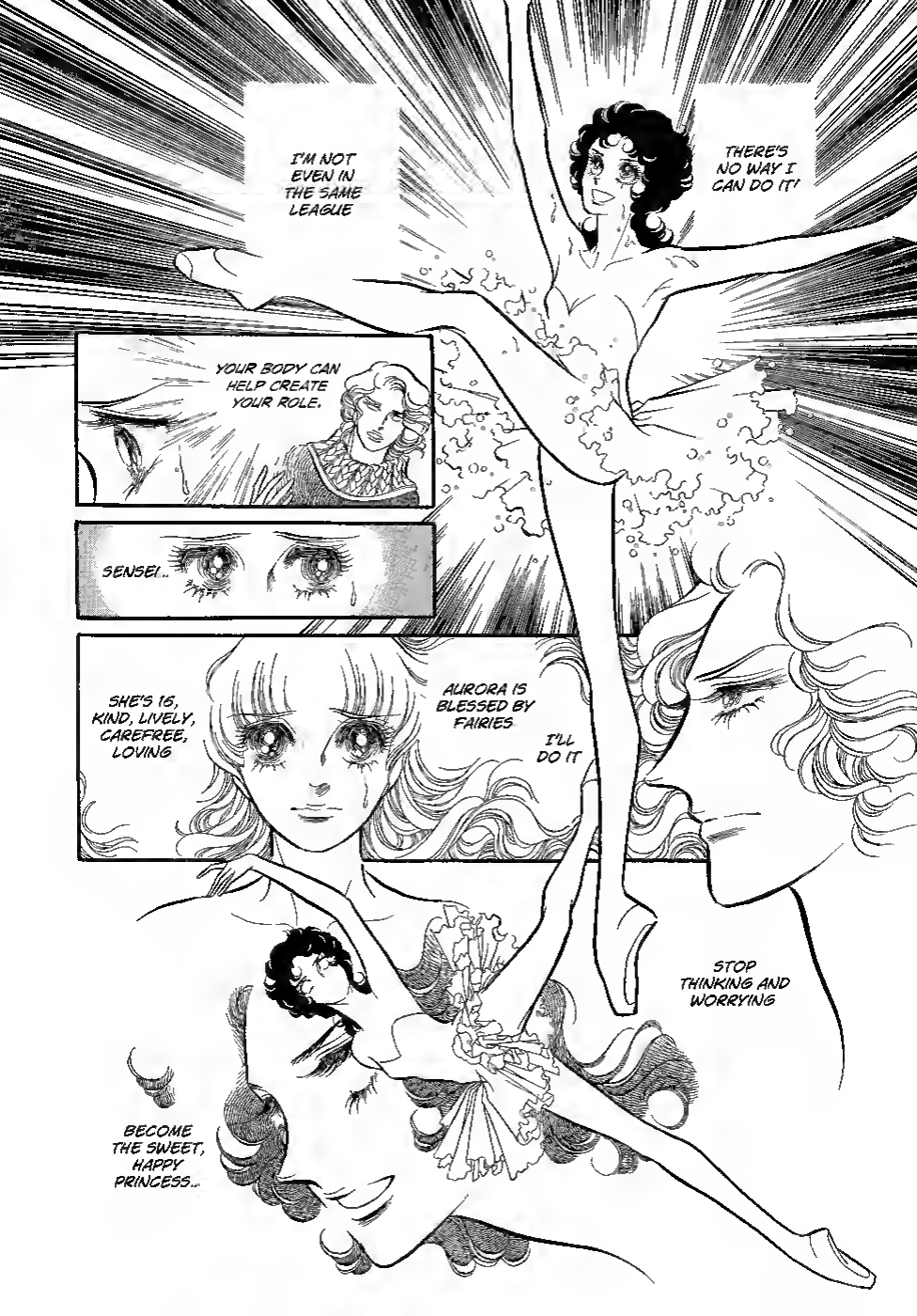
OKAY.
GOOD! NOW SHOW ME YOUR PASSÉ AGAIN.
GOT IT?
YES!
I'LL TRY!
SFX. Fu (Sigh)
?
WHEN DID THIS START?
SHE TRAINS EVERY NIGHT?
THANK YOU.
TAKE A 15 MINUTE BREAK.
...

WE'RE BOTH TRYING OUT FOR AURORA.
WHY DOES MASUMI GET SPECIAL LESSONS?
SENSEI!
I HAVE A QUESTION!
WHAT'S GOING ON?
IT JUST DOESN'T SEEM FAIR.
SO...
FROM TRAINING AT NIGHT.
NO ONE IS STOPPING YOU...
WELL, YUKA,
FINE!
SENSEI!
WHAT?
NO MATTER HOW MUCH SHE TRAINS, SHE WON'T BE READY!
JUST YOU WAIT!
THE AUDITIONS FOR AURORA ARE COMING UP.
THE ROLE OF AURORA IS MINE!
PRACTICE ALL YOU WANT!

SWAN
ARIYOSHI KYOKO
MARIS
SCANNER
MAYA PERRY (CMX)
TRANSLATOR
MARIS
PROOFREADER
MARIS
EDITOR
MARIS
QUALITY CONTROL
SHOUJO MANGA MANIAC
WWW.SHOUJO-MANGA.ORG


NOW...
AUDITIONS FOR THE ROLE OF AURORA WILL BEGIN.
FIRST ASAGI, THEN HIJIRI. DO THE VARIATION.
I'LL WIN!
I WANT TO BE CHOSEN!
I CAN FEEL HER ENERGY
I'M AURORA!
JUST WATCH ME, MASUMI!
YOU WON'T GIVE THIS ROLE TO ANYONE ELSE!

THAT PASSION! IT'S LIKE A FLAME!
I CAN'T DANCE LIKE THAT!
SHE'S GOOD!
OH, NO!


I'M NOT EVEN IN THE SAME LEAGUE
THERE'S NO WAY I CAN DO IT!
YOUR BODY CAN HELP CREATE YOUR ROLE.
SENSEI...
SHE'S 16, KIND, LIVELY, CAREFREE, LOVING
AURORA IS BLESSED BY FAIRIES
I'LL DO IT
STOP THINKING AND WORRYING
BECOME THE SWEET, HAPPY PRINCESS...

OH, MY!

SHE'S DIFFERENT FROM BEFORE!
HER DANCING... HAS CHANGED!
THOSE MOVES...!

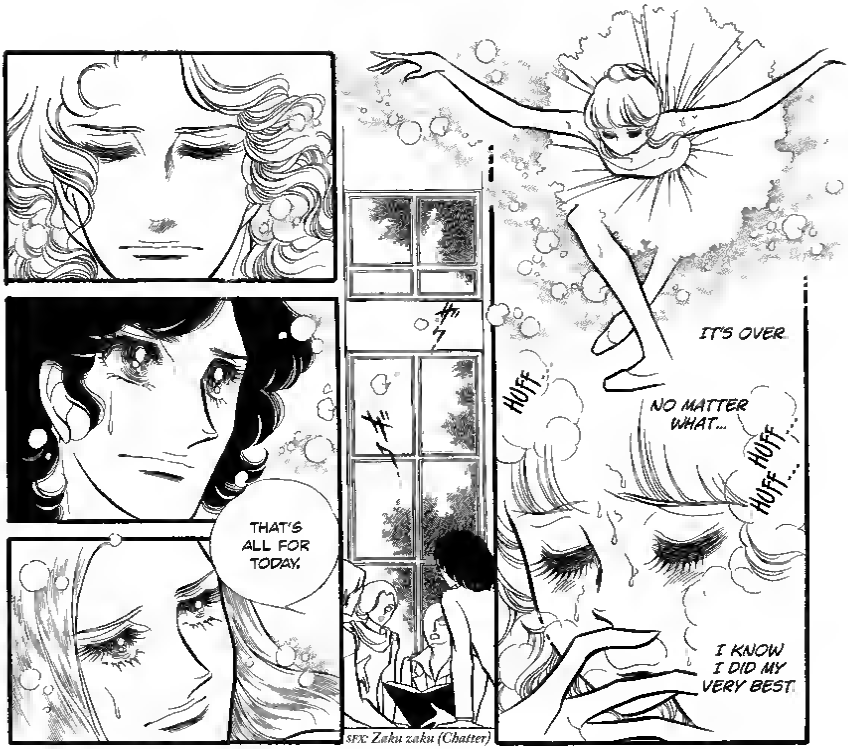
TO THE PRACTICE HALL.
HEY!
WHERE ARE YOU GOING?
SFX. Katan (Step)

IT'S NOT OVER YET!
HUH?
BUT WHY?
...
CAN'T YOU SEE?
WHAT!?
WHAT.. DOES THAT MEAN?
SHE'S NOT THE SAME GIRL SHE WAS YESTERDAY.
SHE'S NOT THE SAME AS YESTERDAY?

SFX Kyutu (Pull)
SHE'S STARTED TO MOVE SO FREELY
HER DANCE IS MORE NATURAL AND STABLE
YEARS OF POOR TRAINING..
OVERCOMING FLAWS IS SO HARD
TAKES YEARS TO FIX
HOW?
NOT PERFECT ..
BUT BETTER

SHE'S SO SMOOTH. EVERY DAY SHE IMPROVES.
YET, THE CHANGE IN JUST TWO WEEKS IS REMARKABLE.
HER BODY IS STILL GROWING..
THAT MUST MEAN...
AND CAN STILL CHANGE..
NOW I GET WHY...
I GOT SO UPSET..
THE FIRST TIME I SAW HER!
I FINALLY UNDERSTAND!

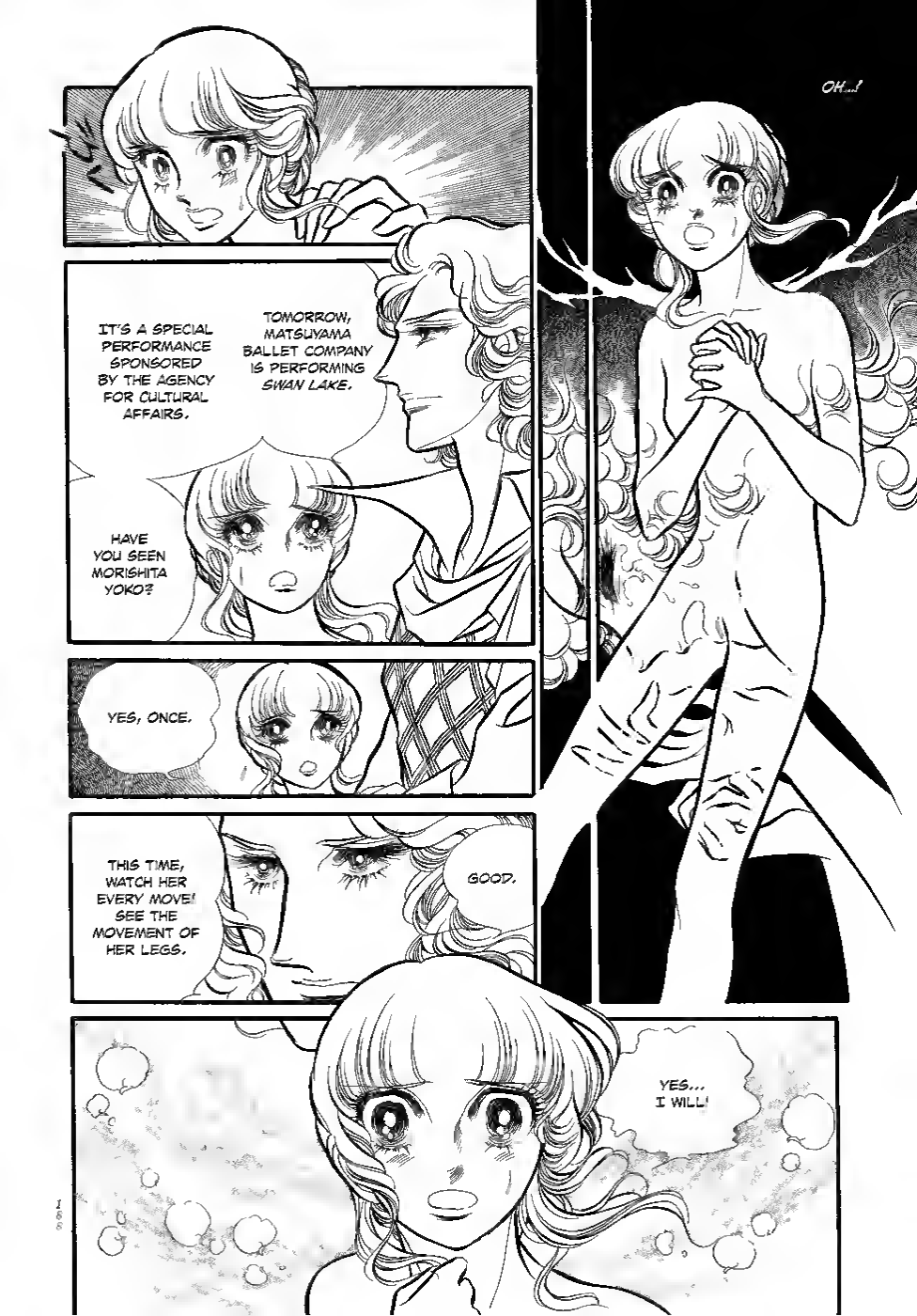
I ALWAYS KNEW THIS DAY WOULD COME
SIGH...
SHE'S GOING PLACES!
THIS IS MY FIRST TIME TO...
SFX: Ka (Step)
SINCE I STARTED DANCING WHEN I WAS SIX...
I'VE FINALLY MET MY TRUE MATCH!
TO FEEL THIS FEAR, AND THIS STRANGE THRILL!


IT'S OVER.
HUFF...
NO MATTER WHAT...
HUFF...
HUFF...
I KNOW I DID MY VERY BEST.
THAT'S ALL FOR TODAY.
SFX: Zaku zaku (Chatter)

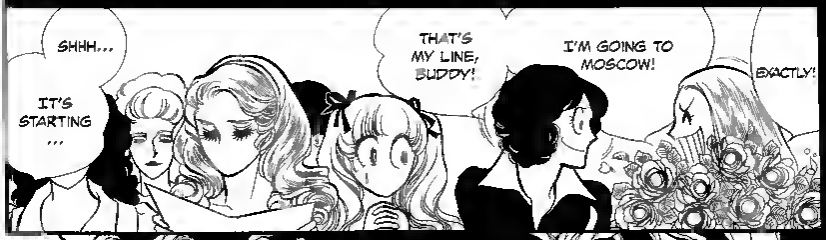
BETWEEN HIJIRI AND KYOGOKU,
WE WILL HAVE A FINAL AUDITION TOMORROW...

I'M MORE SKILLED!
WHY!?
I DON'T UNDERSTAND!
WHY CHOOSE HER!?
WHAT THE..!
WAIT!
IT'S NOT JUST SHOWING STRENGTH OF TECHNIQUE, LIKE SOME SPORT. BALLET IS AN ART.
BECAUSE YOU FORGOT SOMETHING.
THE BEAUTY OF BALLET COMES FROM TECHNIQUE AND SOUL.
FRANKLY...
I'VE NEVER SEEN SUCH AN AURORA!
IT WAS AGGRESSIVE, AND EVEN MENACING.
YOUR DANCING OF AURORA...

WAIT!
PLEASE!
LET ME TRY AGAIN!
NEXT TIME, I'LL... I'LL...
OH...!
YOU SHOULD HAVE DONE IT RIGHT THE FIRST TIME!
THERE ARE NO SECOND CHANCES ON STAGE!
SFX: Waaah!
UGH...


OH...!
TOMORROW, MATSUYAMA BALLET COMPANY IS PERFORMING SWAN LAKE.
IT'S A SPECIAL PERFORMANCE SPONSORED BY THE AGENCY FOR CULTURAL AFFAIRS.
HAVE YOU SEEN MORISHITA YOKO?
YES, ONCE.
GOOD.
THIS TIME, WATCH HER EVERY MOVE! SEE THE MOVEMENT OF HER LEGS.
YES... I WILL!

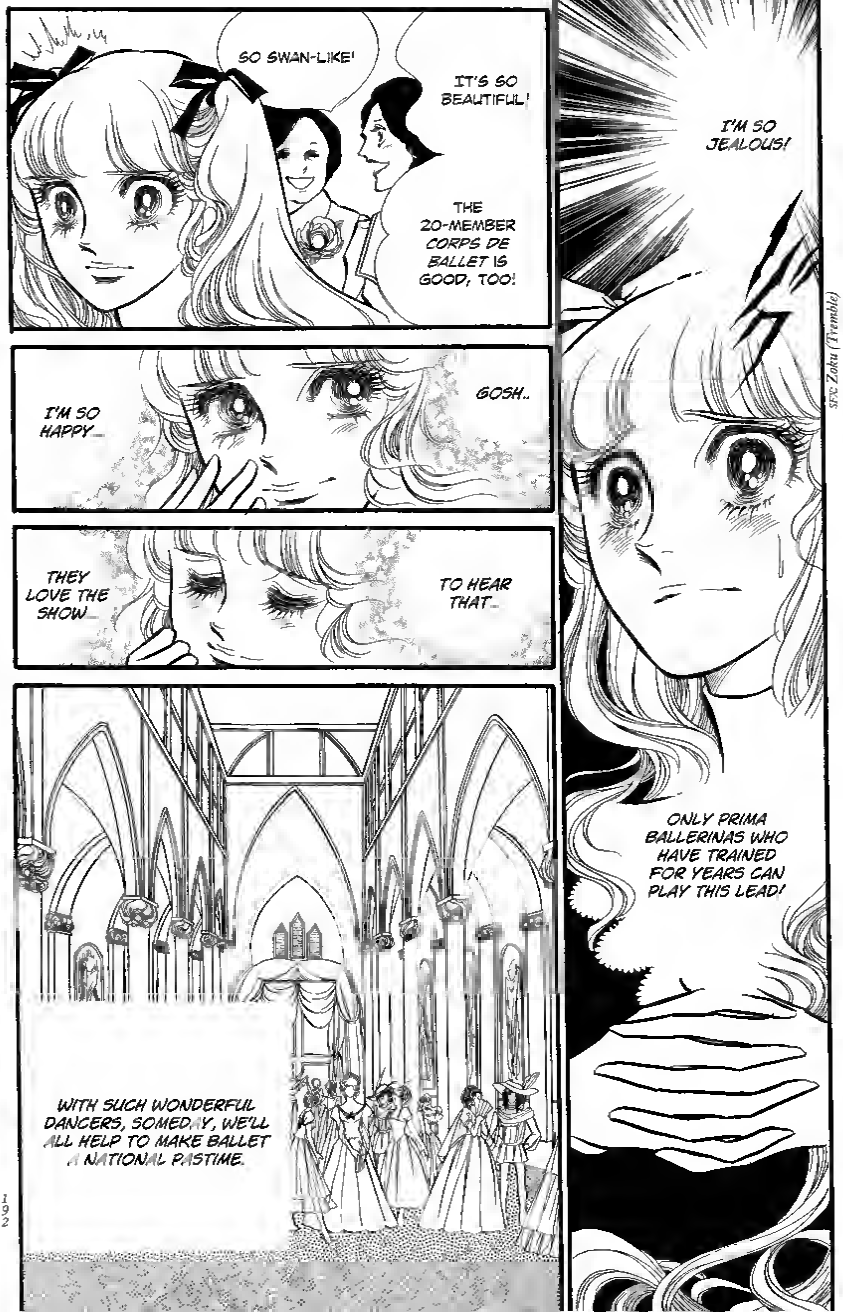
I'M GIVING HER A BOUQUET OF 30 ROSES!
I'M A HUGE FAN OF MORISHITA YOKO!
THIS IS GREAT!
WOW... FIRST ROW SEATS IN THE BALCONY!
COURTESY OF SERGEYEV-SENSEI!
HE WANTS US TO BE INSPIRED!
BALLET DOESN'T HAVE MASS APPEAL IN JAPAN YET.
WHY ARE THERE ONLY TWO PERFORMANCES? WHY NOT MORE?
SO IT'S HARD TO COME UP WITH MONEY FOR EVEN ONE TUTU.
I HOPE WE GET NATIONAL FUNDING SOON.
THAT ALL DEPENDS ON HOW WE DO!



Swan Lake (a ballet in four acts) is a very famous ballet first performed in St Petersburg, Russia in 1877. The music is by Tchaikovsky.

Act I: The forest, with a castle in the distance. The village maidens and friends have a garden party for Prince Siegfried. The *pas de trois* and the dance of Odette takes place.

Act II: By the lakeshore. The prince searches for Odette, who has been turned into a swan by the evil sorcerer Rothbart. The dance of the Three Swans, the Four Swans, Odette's solo, and her *pas de deux* with the prince take place.
Because only true love can break the spell, the prince promises to marry Odette before leaving the lake


SO SWAN-LIKE!
IT'S SO BEAUTIFUL!
THE 20-MEMBER CORPS DE BALLET IS GOOD, TOO!
I'M SO JEALOUS!
I'M SO HAPPY...
GOSH..
THEY LOVE THE SHOW...
TO HEAR THAT...
ONLY PRIMA BALLERINAS WHO HAVE TRAINED FOR YEARS CAN PLAY THIS LEAD!
WITH SUCH WONDERFUL DANCERS, SOMEDAY, WE'LL ALL HELP TO MAKE BALLET A NATIONAL PASTIME.

SFC Zoku (Tremble)

Act III: Rothbart brings Odile, the Black Swan, as an eligible bride. The prince, bewitched by the dark and mysterious charm of Odile, mistakenly chooses her for his bride, thus breaking his promise to Odette
SFX: Wow! Wow! Wow!
HOW FABULOUS THAT SHE'S ALSO JAPANESE, JUST LIKE US!
GOSH!
AWESOME!
HER ABILITY TO MIME AND THOSE PRECISE 32 TURNS!
AND THRILLING PEOPLE!
BEING THE BEST...
UP THERE NOW...
I WISH WE WERE...

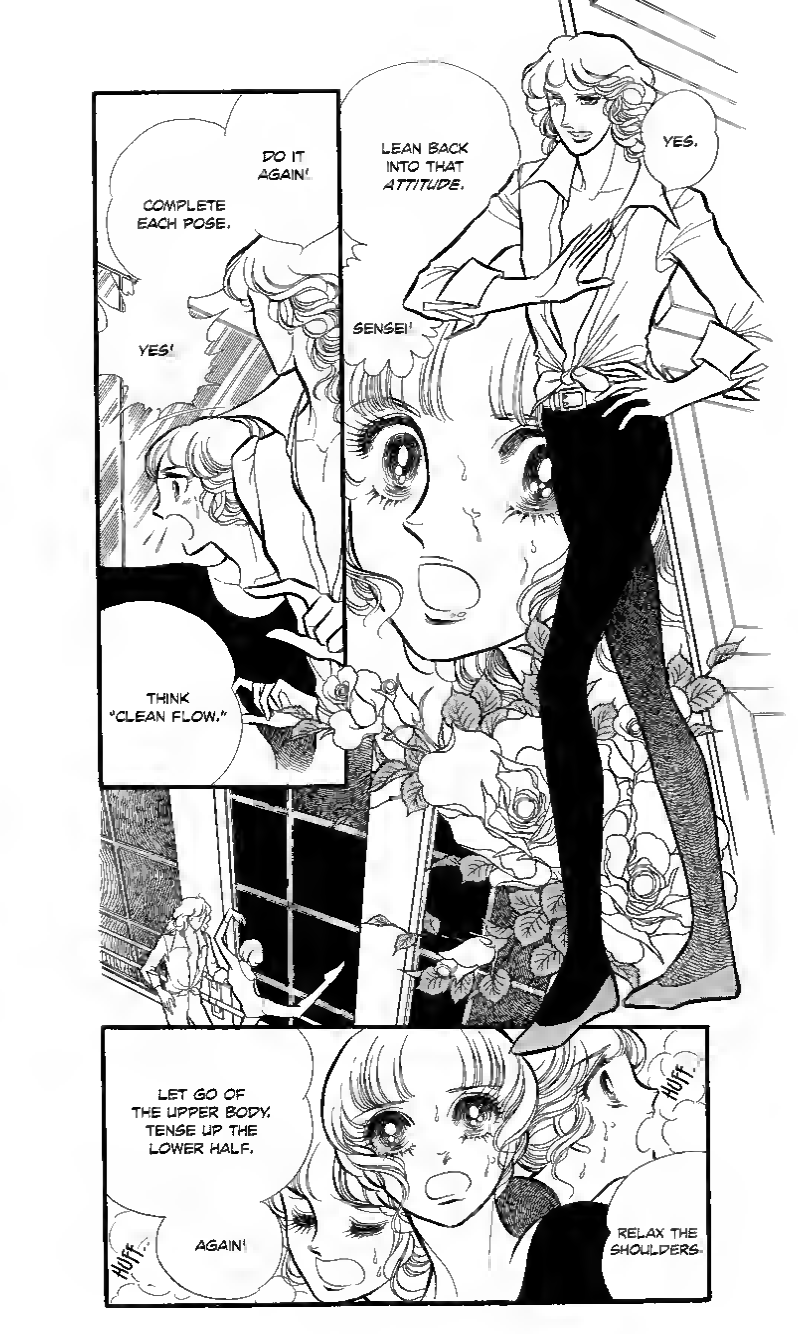
Act IV The theme of this ballet is "true love conquers all." Sure enough, the prince is able to heal the misunderstanding with Odette, destroy Rothbart, and turn Odette back into her human form.
WATCH HER EVERY MOVE!
WHAT..?
...!?

TOMORROW IS OUR FINAL AUDITION!

I CAN'T HELP WONDERING...

MORISHITA'S DANCE WAS..
SO VIVID AND PASSIONATE
HOW DOES SHE DO IT?
HER POSES AND PAS FLOW SO BEAUTIFULLY
NEVER APPEARING TIRED..
ALWAYS PEACEFUL AND SERENE
SUSTAIN THAT?
HOW DO YOU..

IT'S ALL SO CONFUSING!
I CAN'T FIGURE IT OUT!
I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO ANYMORE!
HOW CAN I COMPETE LIKE THAT?
I WANT TO IMPROVE!
BUT I HAVE TO TRY!
AND DANCE WITHOUT DISTRACTIONS!
I WANT TO GET BETTER!
MUCH BETTER!


YES.
LEAN BACK INTO THAT *ATTITUDE.*
SENSEI!
DO IT AGAIN!
COMPLETE EACH POSE.
YES!
THINK "CLEAN FLOW."
HUFF.
LET GO OF THE UPPER BODY. TENSE UP THE LOWER HALF.
AGAIN!
HUFF.
RELAX THE SHOULDERS.

WELL...
HOW WAS THE SHOW?
IT WAS LOVELY.
SHE WAS LIKE...
A SWAN, IN A HUMAN BODY.
HUFF
HUFF
HUFF
HUFF
HUFF
IT'S JUST...
HMM?
...ND, UM...
HOW DOES SHE...
MANAGE TO CONTROL...
HER BREATHING SO WELL, WHILE DANCING SO LONG?
DANCING ONE SCENE IS AS TOUGH AS A 100-YARD DASH!

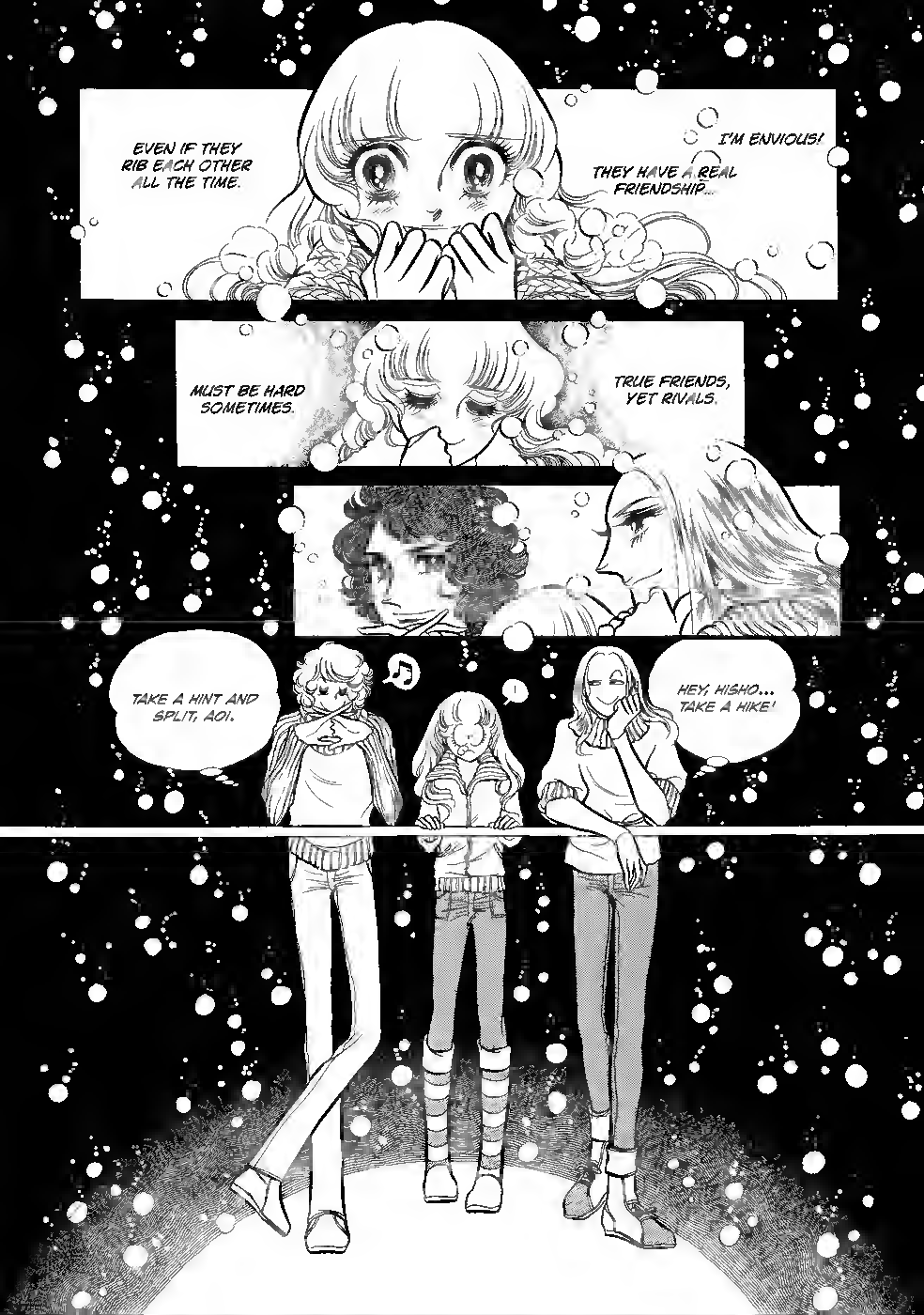
THAT'S ALL RIGHT, HIJIRI. GOOD CATCH!
THANK YOU VERY MUCH!
OH, SORRY!
YOU'RE USING THIS ROOM!
USE YOUR MIND, AND IT WILL BENEFIT YOUR DANCING!
YOU ALWAYS LEARN MORE WHEN YOU THINK!
EVEN THE HALLWAY IS COLD AT NIGHT.. GOTTA KEEP MY LEGS WARM!
IT'S FREEZING!
I'LL REHEARSE EARLY TOMORROW..
SNOW!

IT'S LIKE BEING BACK HOME! IT ALWAYS SNOWS IN HOKKAIDO.
だだだ…
WOW!
IT'S THE FIRST I'VE EVER SEEN IN TOKYO!
SNOW! SNOW!
SFX: Da da da (Thump thump thump)
WHO COULD BE OUT ON THE ROOF IN THIS WEATHER BESIDES ME?
WHO ELSE WOULD BE THIS CRAZY?
HMM?
HAHA!
SFX: Kacha (Click)
KUSAKABE-SAN AND AOI-SAN!
WHOA!
IF IT ISN'T MASUMI! WELCOME!
WELL...

ENCHANTED BY THE SNOW?
IT REMINDS ME OF HOME!
YEAH...
ME, TOO!
SOMEONE HAS TO...
KEEP THIS CRAZY GUY COMPANY!
HOW ARE THINGS WITH YOU?
OH, ME? TERRIBLE!
I'M NO MATCH FOR KYOGOKU-SAN.
PRINCESS SAYOKO ..
SHE REALLY STANDS APART.
APART?
HER KIND OF TALENT IS RARE...
ESPECIALLY IN THE JAPANESE BALLET WORLD.
NOT EVEN THE BEST STUDENTS COULD SURPASS HER BEFORE.
BEING AT THE TOP OF HER CLASS...
EVEN BY HER TEACHERS.
SHE'S BOTH RESPECTED AND ENVIED...
BUT THAT'S WHY SHE'S WORRIED.

YUP.
WORRIED? HER?
BUT WHY? SHE'S SO SPECTACULAR!
HOWEVER, HAVING NO ONE THAT REALLY CHALLENGES YOU...
IS NOT THE BLESSING IT SEEMS TO BE.
SO I MUST BE REALLY LUCKY, THEN!
SINCE I'M THE LEAST SKILLED...
I GET PLENTY OF STIMULATION!
OH!
BUT...
SOMEONE WHO COULD BE A THREAT TO HER MUST HAVE ENORMOUS TALENT!
BECAUSE WITHOUT RIVALS TO STIMULATE YOU...
YOU GET COMPLACENT AND STOP GROWING.

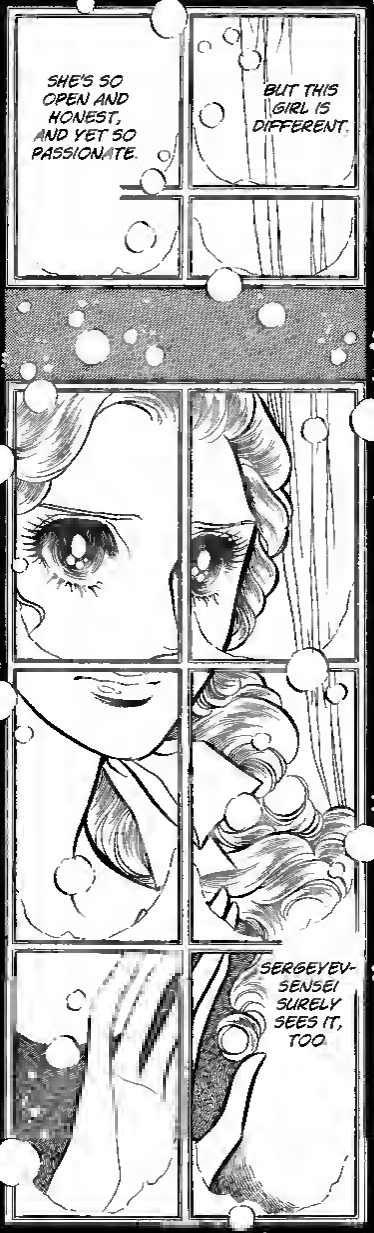
WELL...
MY RIVAL AND I...
ARE ALWAYS FIGHTING FOR FIRST PLACE!
YES, THAT'S TRUE.
YEAH. THERE AREN'T MANY OTHER GUYS AT THE TOP OF BALLET IN JAPAN.
BUT YOU GIVE ME A RUN FOR MY MONEY!
YEAH? WHO WON FIRST PLACE LAST TIME?
SEE? WE STIMULATE EACH OTHER..
BOTH AIMING TO BE THE BEST IN BALLET
AND COMPETING HARD
TILL WE ACHIEVE TRUE GLORY!


EVEN IF THEY RIB EACH OTHER ALL THE TIME.
I'M ENVIOUS!
THEY HAVE A REAL FRIENDSHIP...
MUST BE HARD SOMETIMES.
TRUE FRIENDS, YET RIVALS.
TAKE A HINT AND SPLIT, AOI.
HEY, HISHO... TAKE A HIKE!

I'LL BE GOING NOW!
SORRY TO DISTURB YOUR CONVERSATION!
OH!
SFX: Puuu (Fwoop)
SO WHAT HAPPENED IN HOKKAIDO, ANYWAY?
AND NEVER BEEN KISSED!
SHE'S SO SWEET...
CHAHAHA~
GOOD NIGHT!
Sigh
WHAT'S WITH THE SMILE?
TELL IT ALL, YOU!

A/V Room
Irina Kolpakova in The Sleeping Beauty
NONE OF MY POTENTIAL RIVALS...
WERE A REAL THREAT IN THE PAST.

CAN'T STOP THINKING...
IN MY HEAD, I KEEP SEEING MORISHITA DANCING...
SHE DANCES SO INTENSELY...
YET HER BREATHING IS SO CONTROLLED. IS IT TECHNIQUE OR... TALENT?


SHE'S SO OPEN AND HONEST, AND YET SO PASSIONATE.
BUT THIS GIRL IS DIFFERENT.
SERGEYEV-SENSEI SURELY SEES IT, TOO.

SFX: Chun chun (Chirp chirp)
G'MORNING.
WHAT'S UP?
SHH!
HUH?
SFX: Kacha (Click)
INCREDIBLE!
I WAS HERE BY 7AM TODAY.
YET BOTH OF THEM WERE ALREADY HERE!
THAT GIRL FANCIES HERSELF A CONTENDER!
THIS IS A FIRST FOR KYOGOKU-SAN!
HEY, AT LEAST SHE NEVER GIVES UP!
SENSEI'S HERE!

SERGEYEV-SENSEI WILL PARTNER WITH BOTH HIJIRI AND KYOGOKU IN THE GRAND PAS DE DEUX.
TODAY IS THE FINAL AUDITION FOR PRINCESS AURORA.
PARTNERING WITH SENSEI!!
THANK YOU, SIR!
MY HEART IS POUNDING!
GEEZ... I'M A BUNDLE OF NERVES!
SFX. Doki doki doki (Ba-thump ba-thump ba-thump)
HIJIRI MASUMI, COME TO THE CENTER.
YES!
WINNING MEANS GOING TO MOSCOW!
CALM DOWN!
MUSTN'T GET NERVOUS!

SWAN
ARIYOSHI KYOKO
MARIS
SCANNER
MAYA PERRY (CMX)
TRANSLATOR
MARIS
PROOFREADER
MARIS
EDITOR
MARIS
QUALITY CONTROL
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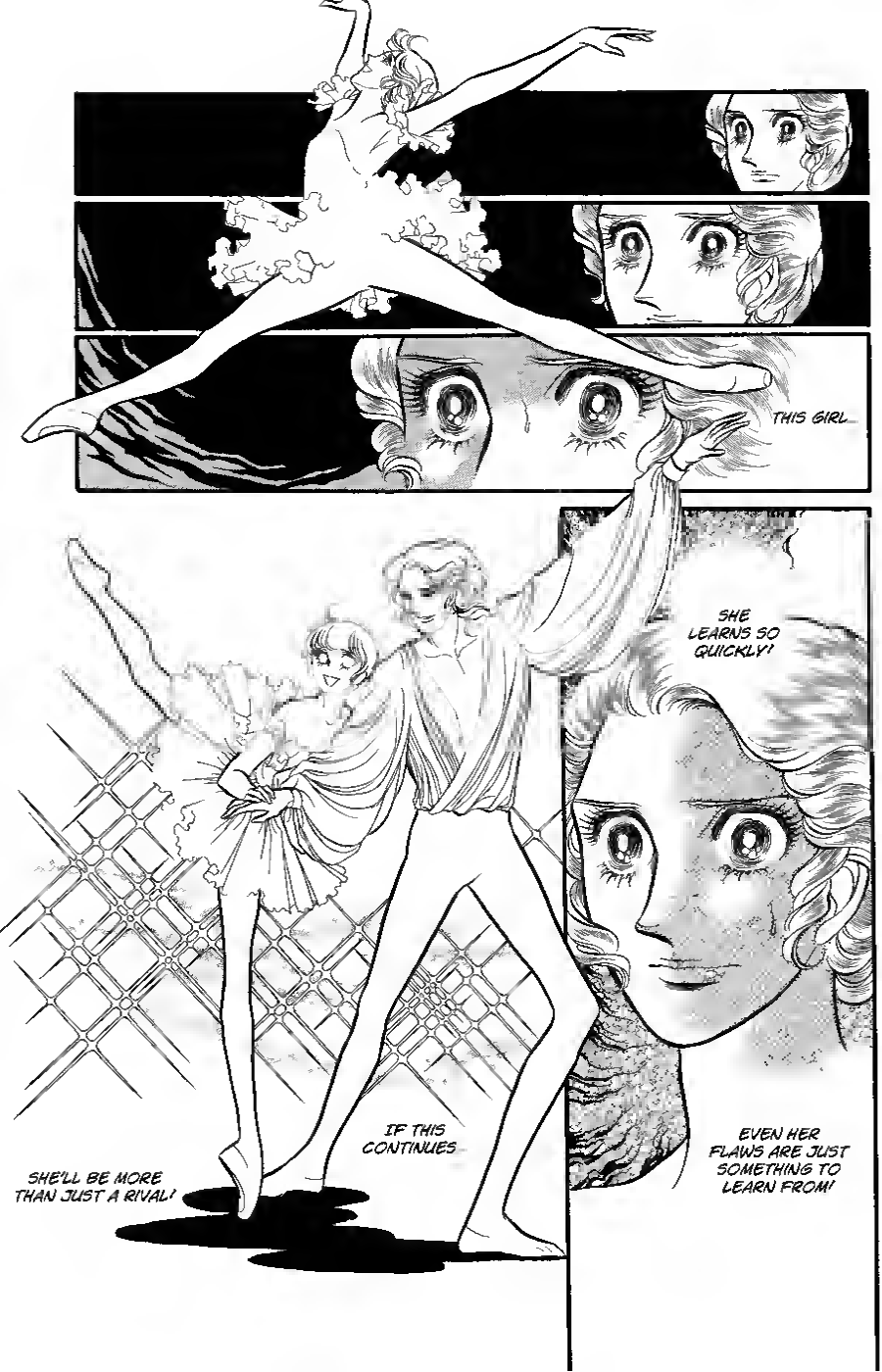

THIS GIRL...
SHE LEARNS SO QUICKLY!
EVEN HER FLAWS ARE JUST SOMETHING TO LEARN FROM!
IF THIS CONTINUES...
SHE'LL BE MORE THAN JUST A RIVAL!

GOOD! NOW, INHALE DEEPLY.
OH..
SENSEI..!?

FOCUS YOUR ATTENTION ON YOUR LEGS.
GOOD! HOLD, THEN INHALE!
INHALE DEEPLY NOW!
INHALE, THEN TIGHTEN YOUR HEAD, NECK, CHEST AND ARMS.
SENSEI...
EXHALE HARD! NOW SWAY BACK.

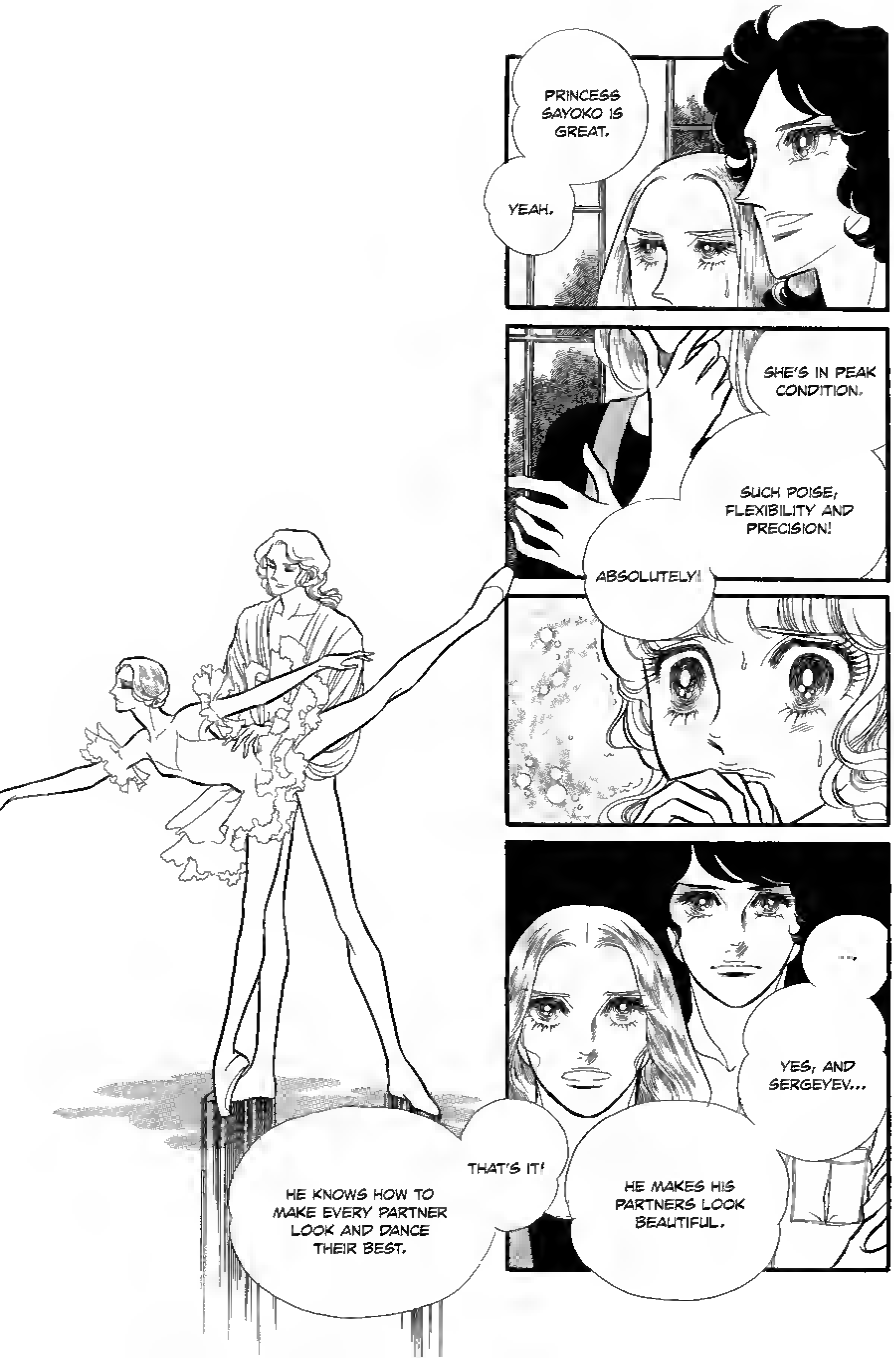
AND AGAIN.
GOOD.
BREATHE IN...
AND OUT.
AND IN!
STRETCH OUT FULLY!

FEET FIRMLY ON THE GROUND, AND ALL JOINTS TURNED OUT EN DEHORS.
NO TIME TO THINK.
NO, STOP.
NOT NOW
WHY?
WHY IS MY BODY SO LIMBER TODAY?
HOW..
HOW DID HE KNOW MY QUESTIONS ABOUT BREATHING TECHNIQUE?

SFX. Ooh!
おお!

SFX: Whew!
H-F-!
YOU WERE FABULOUS!
YOU DID SO WELL!
AWESOME, MASUMI-CHAN!
I... I...
I DON'T KNOW HOW I DID...
I JUST DID MY BEST.

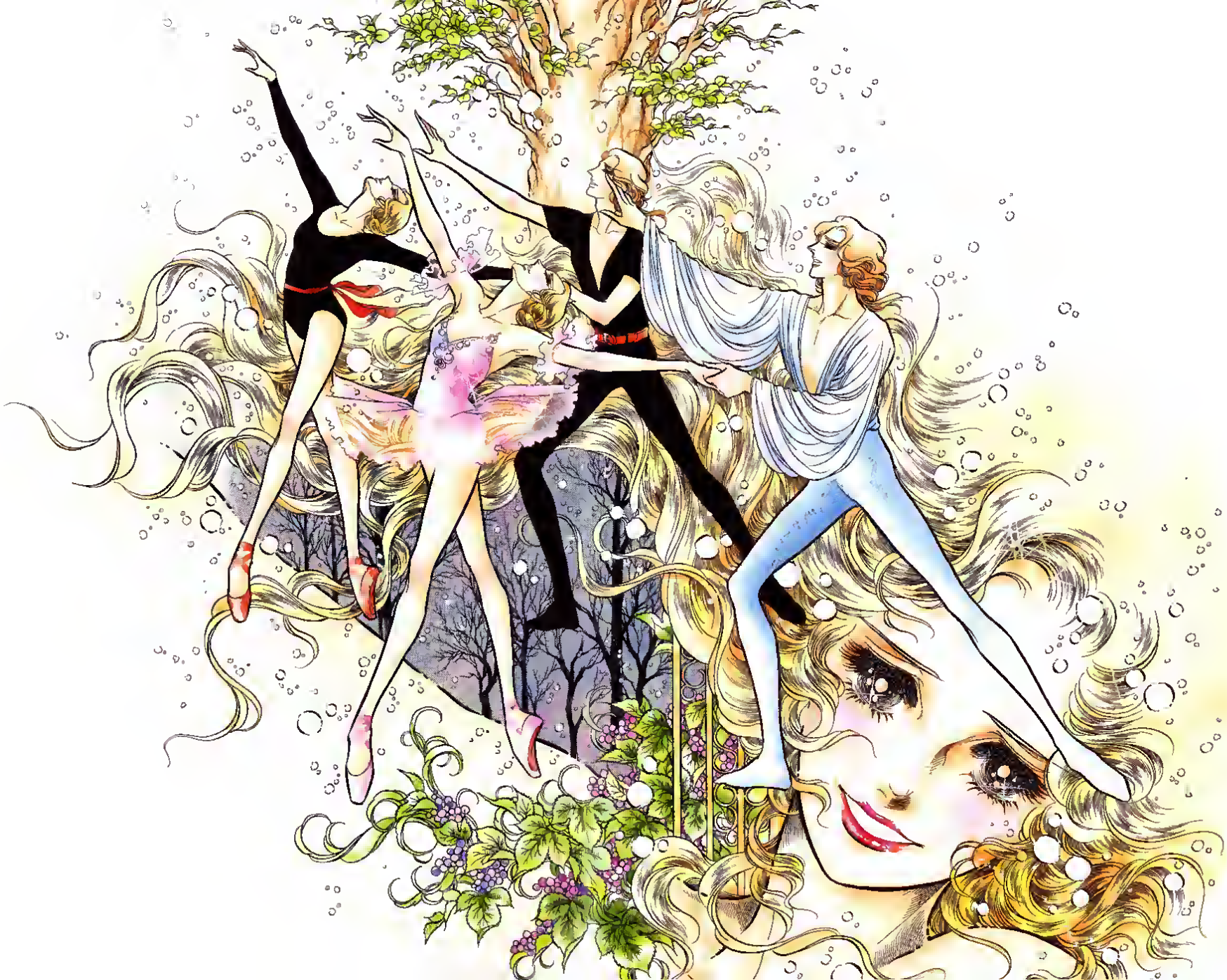
SFX: *Goku (Gulp)*


PRINCESS SAYOKO IS GREAT.
YEAH.
SHE'S IN PEAK CONDITION.
SUCH POISE, FLEXIBILITY AND PRECISION!
ABSOLUTELY!
...
YES, AND SERGEYEV...
HE MAKES HIS PARTNERS LOOK BEAUTIFUL.
THAT'S IT!
HE KNOWS HOW TO MAKE EVERY PARTNER LOOK AND DANCE THEIR BEST.

HE IS THE TOP *DANSEUR NOBLE* AT THE BOLSHOI.
AFTER ALL,
BUT IT'S NOT AS EASY AS IT LOOKS!
THEY SAY RUDOLF NUREYEV OF THE ROYAL BALLET IS GREAT AT IT, TOO.
WE'RE NOT SKILLED ENOUGH FOR THAT.
NOT YET.
CLASSICAL BALLET REQUIRES THE MALES TO HAVE GREAT CONSIDERATION FOR THEIR FEMALE PARTNER.
JUST LOOK AT THAT LIFT!
WOW!
SERGEYEV IS SO SOLID.
HIS LEGS SO STABLE!
SHE LOOKS LIKE SHE'S FLOATING IN MID-AIR!
NO ONE EVER MADE PRINCESS SAYOKO LOOK THAT GREAT BEFORE!
JUST INCREDIBLE!

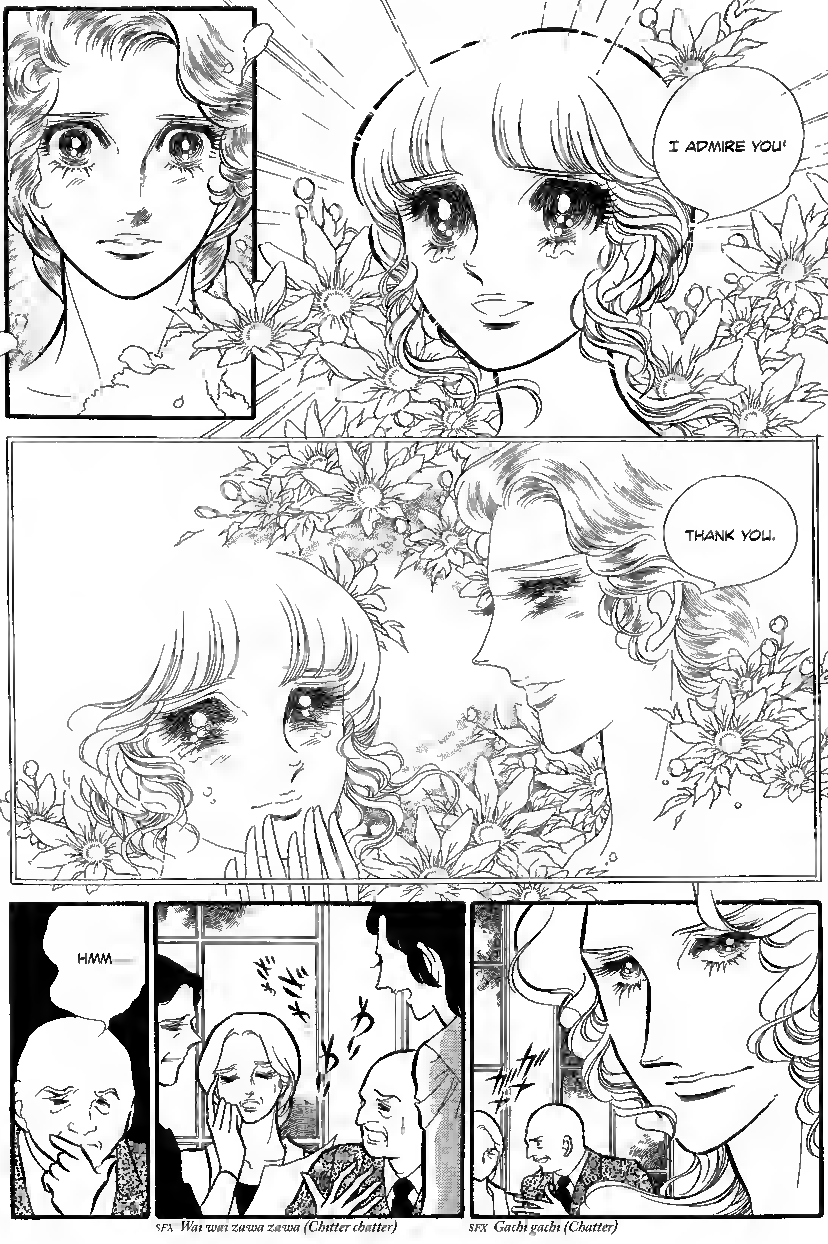
?
!
SFX: Doki (Ba thump)
I HEARD THAT!
WE'RE NO MATCH FOR HIM.
HE'S TOO AWESOME!
SFX: Baku (Twitch)
PLEASE BE READY.
THE AUDITION WILL BE IN STUDIO C.
THE TWO PEOPLE AUDITIONING FOR THE ROLE OF BLUE BIRD...
WHAT... AND LET YOU STEAL MY ROLE?
SO STAY AND WATCH, THEN!
BUT THEY'RE NOT DONE YET!
YES, SIR!
SFX: Patan (Click)

EVERYTHING ABOUT HER...
IS SO STUNNINGLY BEAUTIFUL!
SHE EVEN HAS THE SENSIBILITY OF PLISETSKAYA OR MORISHITA YOKO, TOO
LEAPING ABILITY...
ALL BLEND SO GRACEFULLY...
HER PRECISION...
MY HEART ACHES...
IT FEELS LIKE I'M BEING...
DRAWN INTO HER WORLD!



SFX: Zuun (Gloom)
SFX: Wow!
Oh!

THANK YOU.
YOU WERE SUCH A LOVELY AURORA!
YOU...



SFX *Wai'wai zawa zawa (Chitter chatter)*

SFX *Gachi gachi (Chatter)*

SFX: Katan (Bam)

AFTER BOTH PERFORM ALL SOLO PARTS FROM THE SHOW.
WILL BE DECIDED...
SFX: Wai wai zawa zawa (Chitter chatter)
KYOGOKI-SAN!?
SFX: Kata (Step)
WHAT? AGAIN!?
THEY COULDN'T DECIDE?
IMPOSSIBLE... THE ENTIRE THING, NOW?

SFX: Zawa (Mutter)

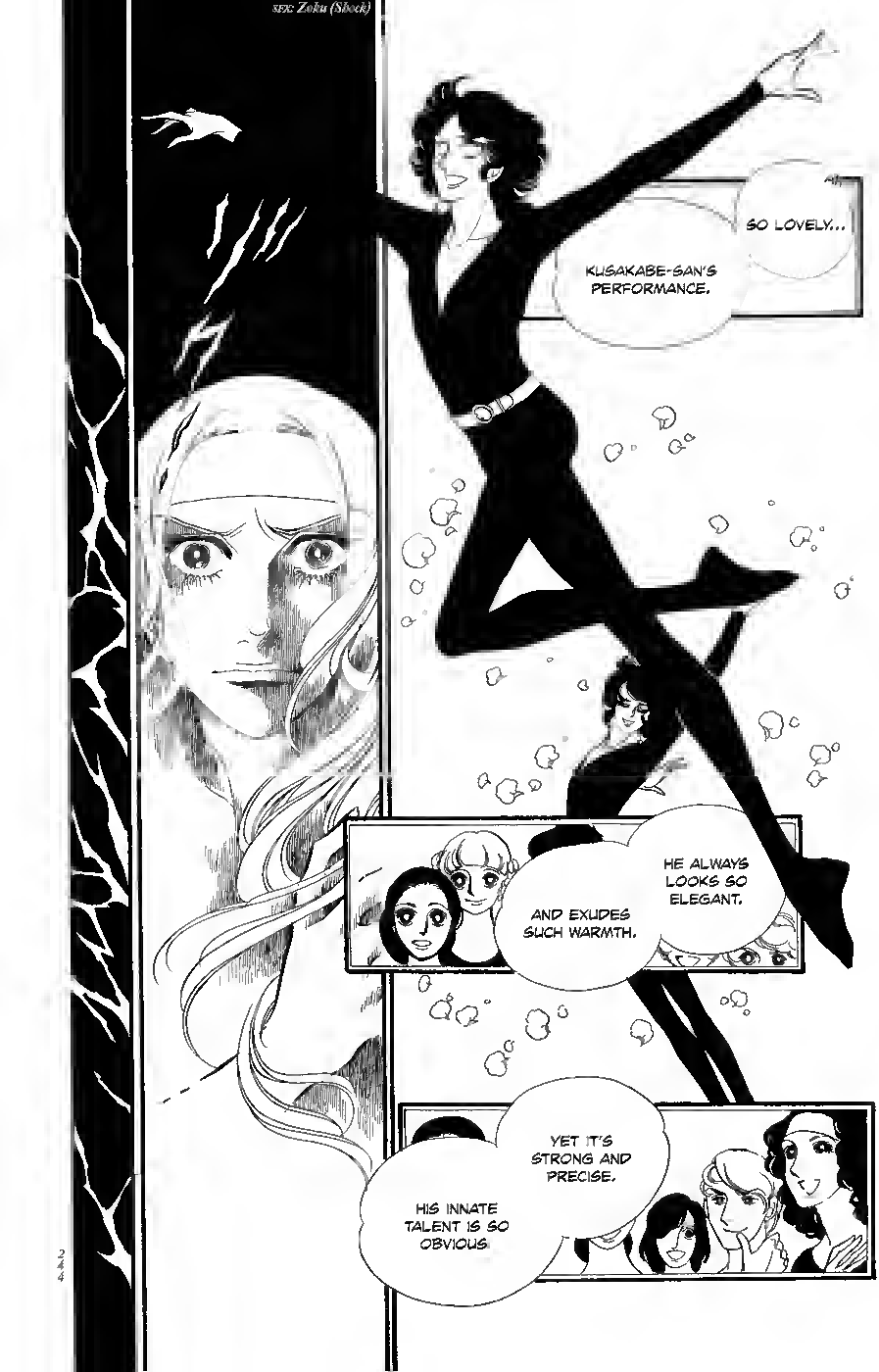
SFX: Pon (Plink)

IT WAS ALL O'VER WITH ALREADY!
I WISH...

SO YOUNG AND OVERFLOWING WITH ENERGY!
HE'S BOLD AND ORIGINAL.
SUCH LEAPING ABILITY!
IT'S INCREDIBLE!
HIS JETÉS NEVER LOSE THEIR FORCE!
SIMPLY EXCELLENT!

EVERY TIME I DANCE, I WONDER..
DID I DO MY BEST? WAS I RELAXED ENOUGH?
...
EACH TIME, I ALWAYS SEARCH MY SOUL..
THANK YOU.
BUT STILL, WHEN IT'S ALL OVER, THE DOUBTS COME BACK AT THE END
I GUESS...
IT ALL COMES DOWN TO ONE'S ABILITY.
THAT WAS YOUR BEST YET, AOI.
SFX Pon (Pat)
I'M SURE OF IT.
THINK SO?
...

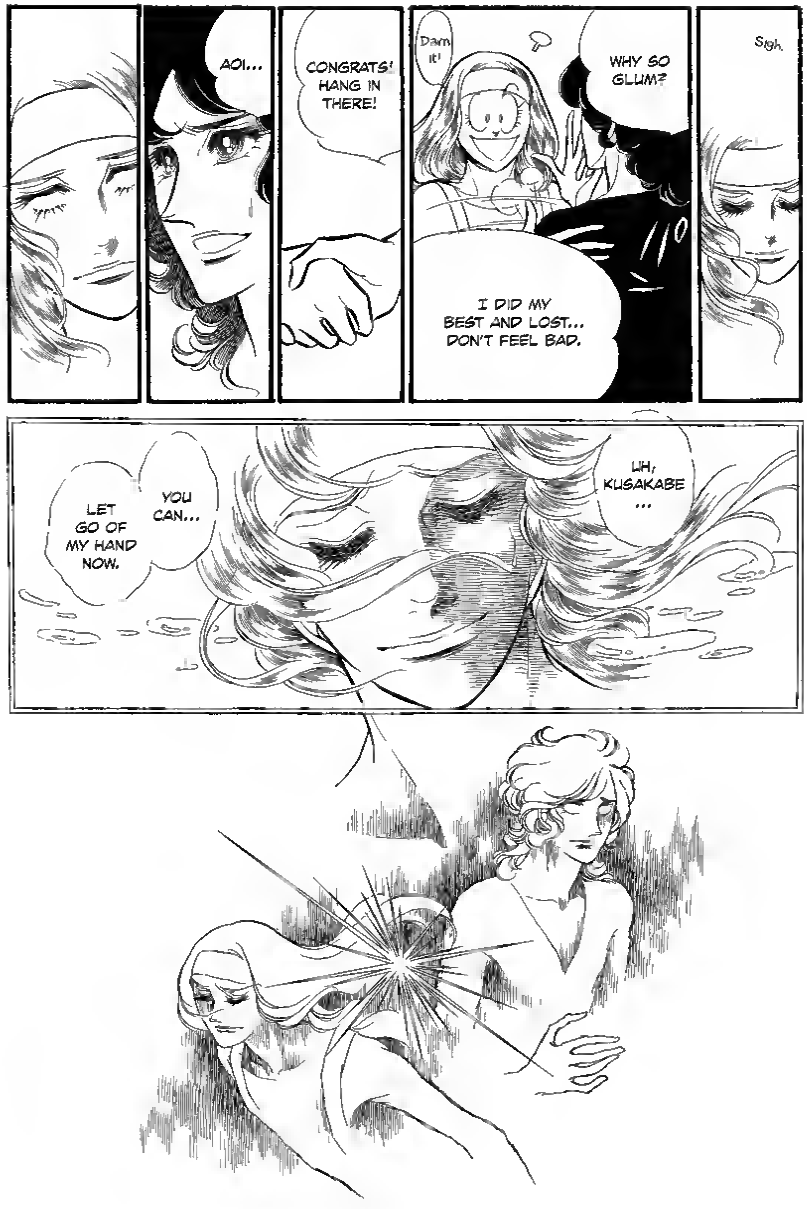
YEAH...
I THINK SO, TOO.


KUSAKABE-SAN'S PERFORMANCE.
SO LOVELY...
HE ALWAYS LOOKS SO ELEGANT.
AND EXUDES SUCH WARMTH.
YET IT'S STRONG AND PRECISE.
HIS INNATE TALENT IS SO OBVIOUS

IF KUSAKABE-SAN IS THE CLASSIC TYPE OF *DANSEUR NOBLE*, THEN AOI-SAN...
YANAGISAWA-SAN'S UNIQUE SENSIBILITY IS THE TOTAL OPPOSITE.

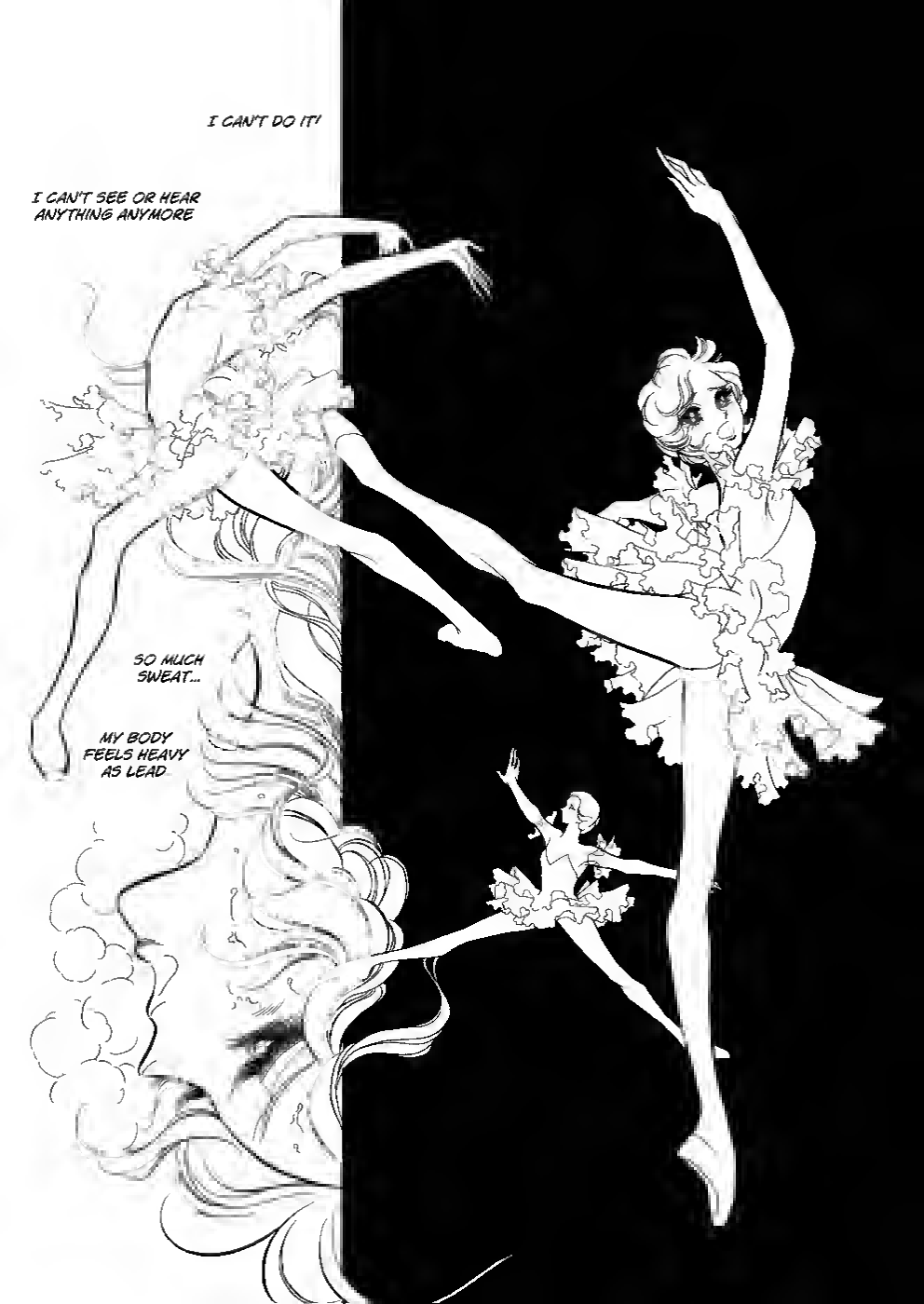
IT'S A DISADVANTAGE FOR A DANSEUR NOBLE.
YANAGISAWA'S SOLOS CAN SEEM COLD AND RECKLESS.
YEAH, BUT...
IT'S HARD TO SAY WHO'S BETTER.
ON THE OTHER HAND, KUSAKABE IS STABLE AND PLEASANT.
WHAT A DIFFICULT CHOICE FOR THE JUDGES!
SHHH...
SFV Kata (Step)
WE WILL NOW ANNOUNCE THE WINNER.
ALL RIGHT, EVERYONE

SFX: *Pachi pachi pachi (Clap clap clap)*

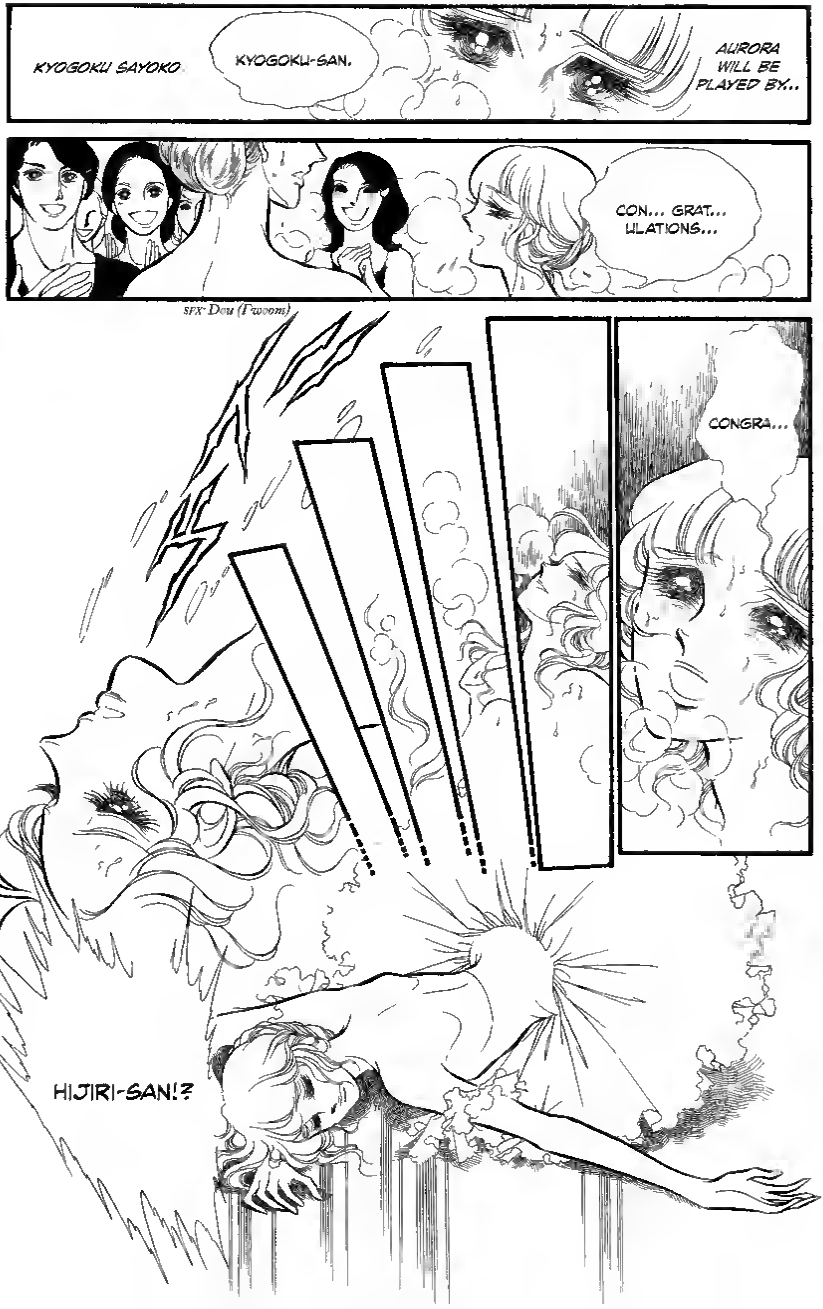

AOI...
CONGRATS! HANG IN THERE!
Darn it!
WHY SO GLUM?
I DID MY BEST AND LOST... DON'T FEEL BAD.
Sigh.
LET GO OF MY HAND NOW.
YOU CAN...
UH, KUSAKABE ...

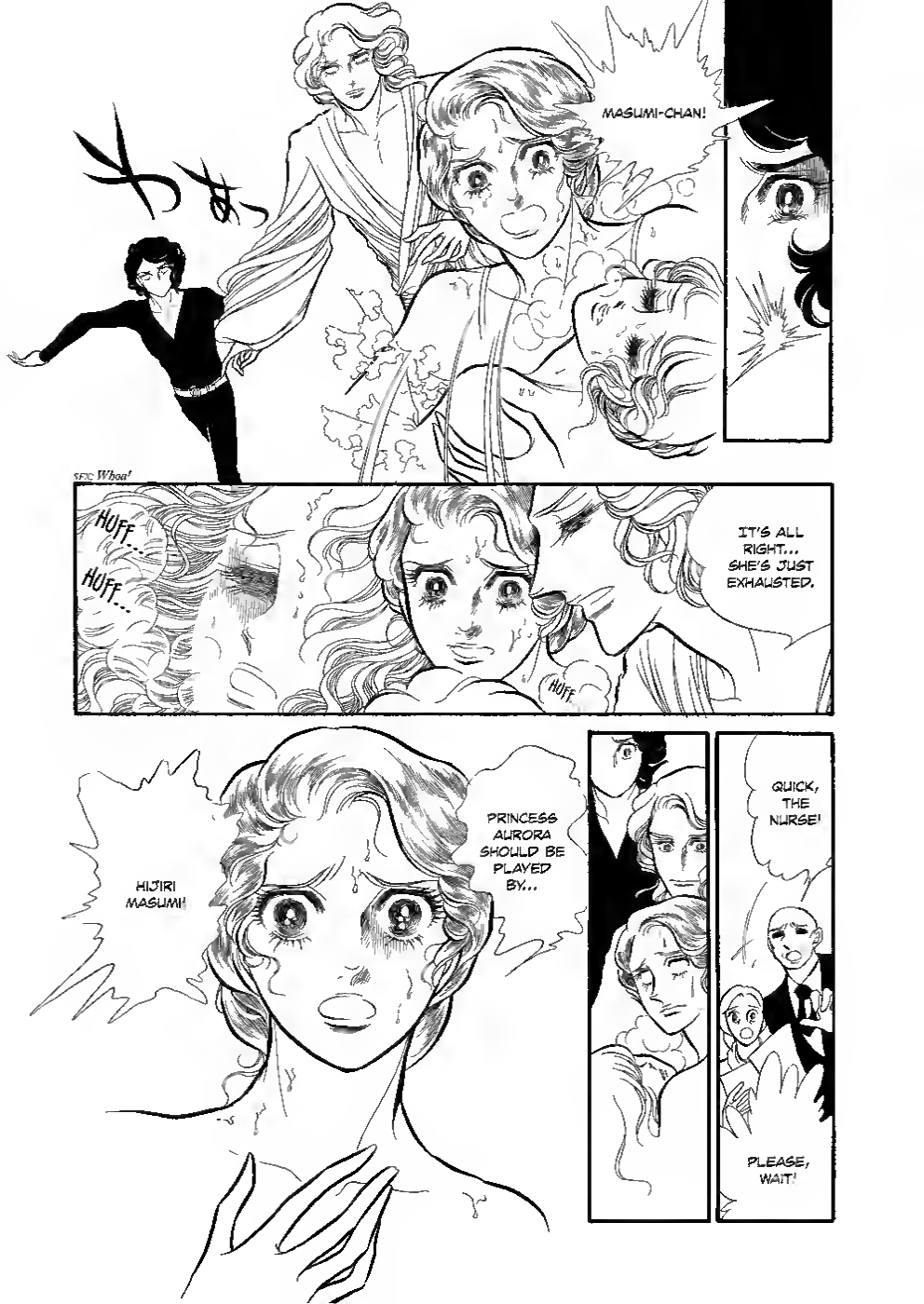
YOU'RE NO BETTER OR WORSE THAN ME, AOI
WE'VE ALWAYS BEEN EQUALS

IT'S NOT OVER YET!?
WHAT THE...?
THEY'VE BEEN IN THERE FOR THE PAST HOUR...
DANCING ALL THE SOLOS FROM THE SHOW!
BUT... THIS IS... ROUGH!
BEING A PRIMA BALLERINA REQUIRES STAMINA.


I CAN'T DO IT!
I CAN'T SEE OR HEAR ANYTHING ANYMORE
SO MUCH SWEAT...
MY BODY FEELS HEAVY AS LEAD

SFX: Wow!
SFX: Pachi pachi pachi (Clap clap clap)
Hm
SFX: Katan (Touch)
THE JUDGES HAVE DECIDED.
AURORA WILL BE PLAYED...
BY KYOGOKU SAYOKO.
IS IT OVER?
AH!
CAN'T MOVE... CAN'T LEAP...
WHERE AM I?
I HAVE NO MORE STRENGTH...

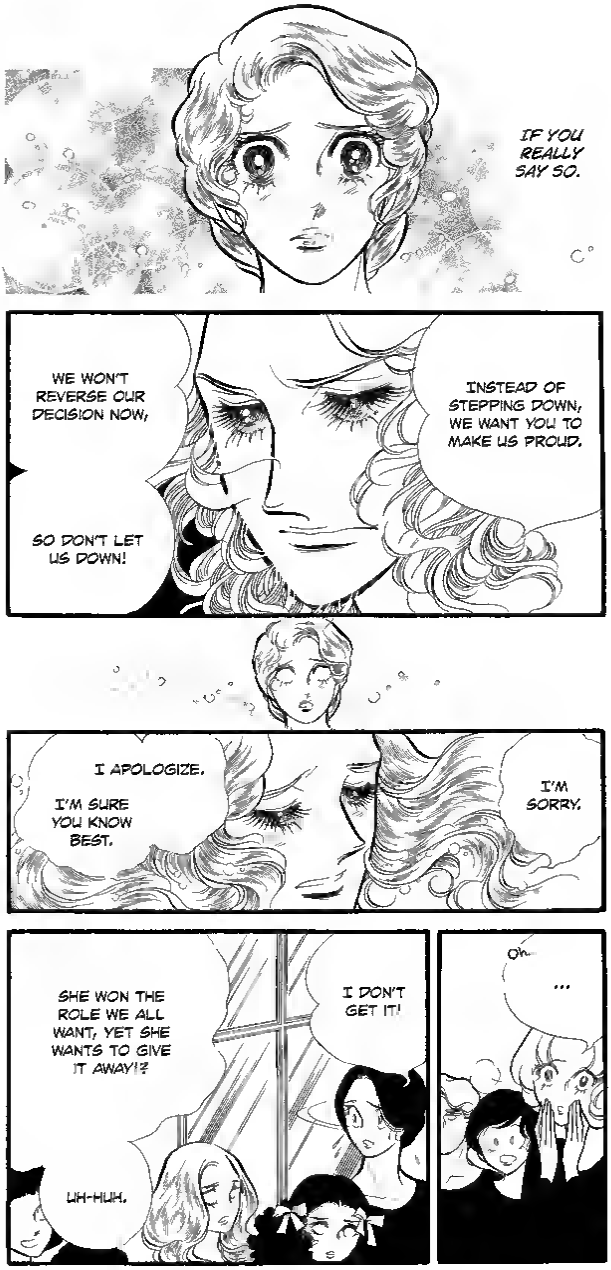

KYOGOKU SAYOKO
KYOGOKU-SAN.
AURORA WILL BE PLAYED BY..
CON... GRAT... ULATIONS...
SFX: Dou (Twoom)
CONGRA...
HIJIRI-SAN!?


MASUMI-CHAN!
SFX: Whoa!
HUFF...
HUFF...
IT'S ALL RIGHT... SHE'S JUST EXHAUSTED.
HUFF
HIJIRI MASUMI!
PRINCESS AURORA SHOULD BE PLAYED BY...
QUICK, THE NURSE!
PLEASE, WAIT!

SHE'S GROWN AMAZINGLY IN THE PAST FEW WEEKS.
I'M SORRY, BUT WE'VE ALREADY DECIDED ...
NO!
SURELY...
SHE'LL BE ABLE TO DO US PROUD...
DANCING AS PRINCESS AURORA IN MOSCOW NEXT MONTH!

SWAN
ARIYOSHI KYOKO
MARIS
SCANNER
MAYA PERRY (CMX)
TRANSLATOR
MARIS
PROOFREADER
MARIS
EDITOR
MARIS
QUALITY CONTROL
SHOUJO MANGA MANIAC
WWW.SHOUJO-MANGA.ORG

I UNDERSTAND YOUR FEELINGS,
BUT YOU'VE MISSED THE POINT.
KYOGOKU-SAN.
HIJIRI CERTAINLY HAS GROWN MORE THAN ANY OF US EXPECTED.
THAT'S RIGHT.
ULANOVA-SENSEI?
BUT WE'RE COUNTING ON YOU TO BE BETTER, TOO.
IN A MONTH, HIJIRI WILL BE EVEN BETTER...
YOU'VE GROWN, TOO.
BUT DON'T FORGET ...
SENSEI ..
SHE HAD SO MANY FLAWS BEFORE.
SO HER IMPROVEMENT SEEMS REMARKABLE.


IF YOU REALLY SAY SO.
WE WON'T REVERSE OUR DECISION NOW,
INSTEAD OF STEPPING DOWN, WE WANT YOU TO MAKE US PROUD.
SO DON'T LET US DOWN!
I APOLOGIZE.
I'M SURE YOU KNOW BEST.
I'M SORRY.
SHE WON THE ROLE WE ALL WANT, YET SHE WANTS TO GIVE IT AWAY!?
I DON'T GET IT!
UH-HUH.
Oh...
...

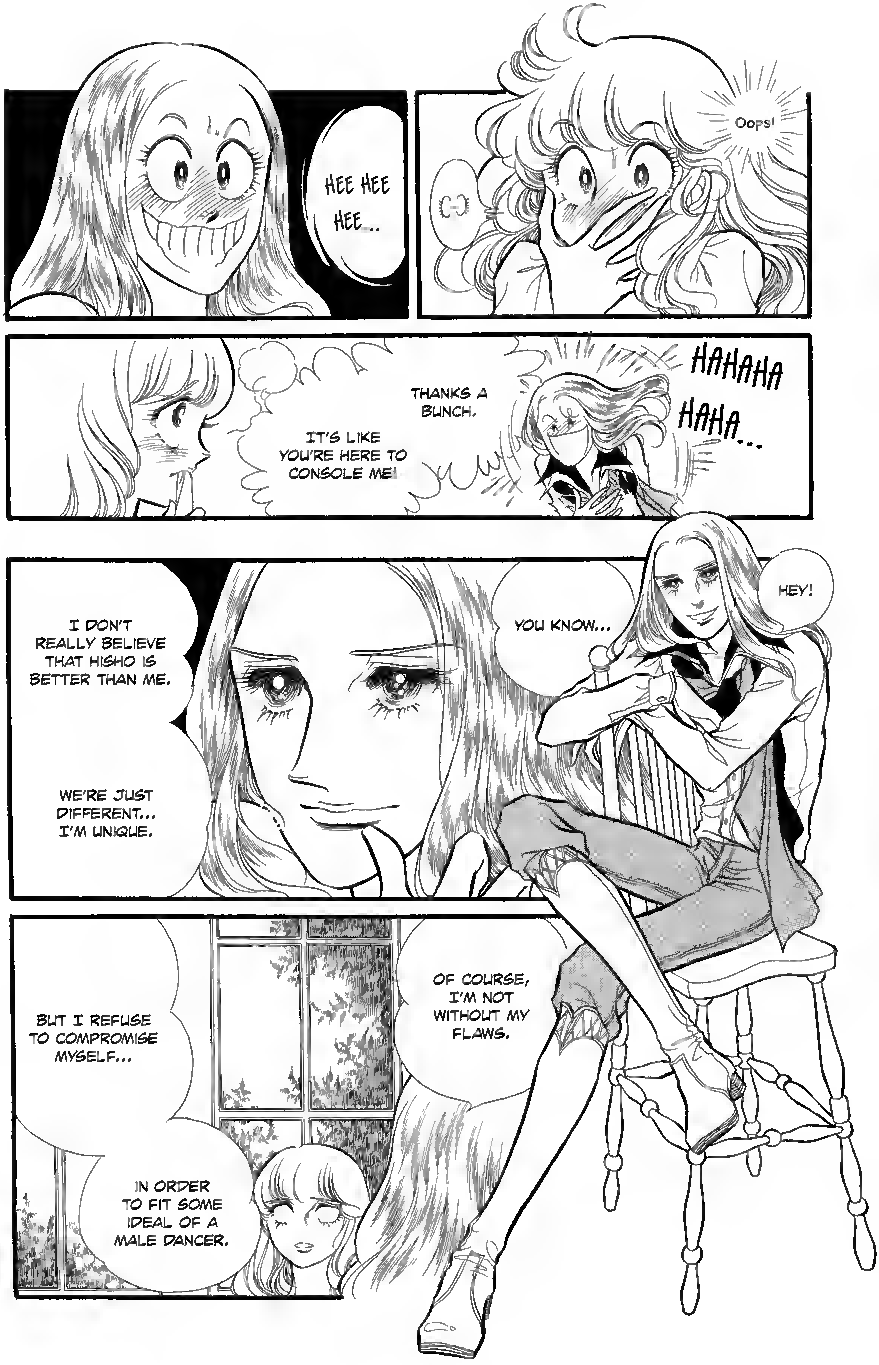
IT'S A ONCE-IN-A-LIFETIME OPPORTUNITY...
YET SHE TRIED TO GIVE IT AWAY!
THIS IS HER CHANCE TO DEBUT OVERSEAS AS A SOLOIST...
AND EVEN STUDY AT THE BOLSHOI.
...
BUT THAT'S SO LIKE HER.
YES.
SUCH POTENTIAL, EH...
...
SERGEYEV-SENSEI?
SENSEI, WE'LL TAKE HER.
AND BRING OUT HER STRENGTHS SO MUCH?
HOW DID YOU MANAGE TO CORRECT HER FLAWS...
WHEN I SAW HER RE-LEARNING THE BASICS, I THOUGHT IT WAS ALL OVER! THANK YOU.
THANK YOU.
WE JUDGES CAN'T LEAVE YET.
MASUMI-CHAN

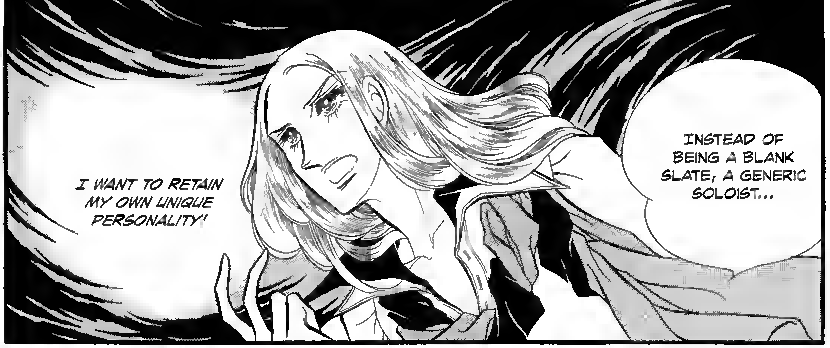
A GREAT PERFORMANCE.
HATS OFF TO YOU.
BUT THIS IS IT.
WELL... YES, . OF COURSE...
AS LONG AS HER FLAWS REMAIN...
BUT... SURELY YOU THINK SHE CAN OVERCOME IT?
HER DANCE WILL NOT GROW BEYOND THIS POINT.
WE WOULD ALSO LIKE TO SEE HER BECOME A PRIMA BALLERINA.
WE'D LIKE TO BELIEVE SHE CAN BE ONE.

HMM
SFX: Zukin (Throb)
DANCE
OWW! MY BODY... NECK... BACK... HURTS!
I'M DYING!
WHY... WHAT AM I... DOING... HERE?
GOTTA DANCE!
THAT'S RIGHT..
IT'S OVER..
WHAT A FOOL

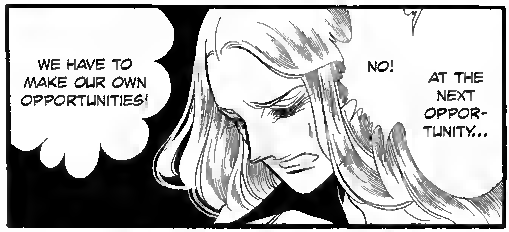
AOI-SAN!
NO MORE MOSCOW...
sexy beam (flung)
STAY PUT! YOU NEED REST!
YOU DID IT.
I HEARD GREAT THINGS ABOUT YOU.
EVERYONE'S PLEASED.
Have a muffin
I HEARD YOU DANCED ALL OF THE SOLO PARTS!
HEY! HOW'RE YOU FEELING?
I HAD TO MISS IT.
I'M SO BUMMED...

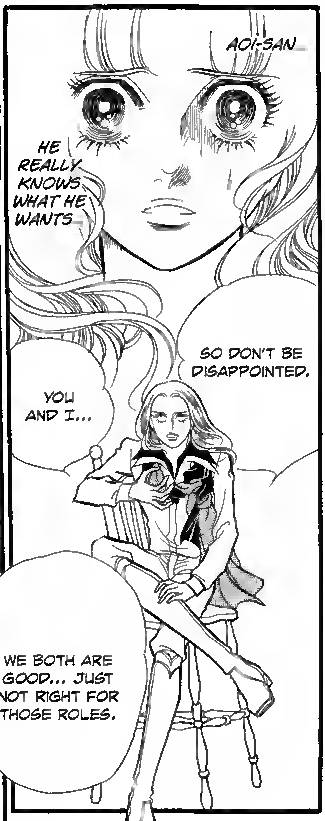
WHAT ABOUT YOU?
BUT, AOI-SAN ...
I lost!
HAHA! BEATEN BY MY RIVAL AGAIN!
JUST LIKE THEY PREDICTED!
...
SFX: Doki (Ba-thump)
APPARENTLY I'M LACKING AS A DANSEUR NOBLE.
THIS ALWAYS HAPPENS...
THAT'S THE CRITICAL DIFFERENCE BETWEEN HISHO AND ME.
...
YOUR JETÉS WERE BEAUTIFUL. THEY WERE SO GRACEFUL YOU APPEARED TO FLY...
NOT TRUE!
I STILL REMEMBER THE FIRST TIME I SAW YOU DANCE AT THE COMPETITION...
I LOVED IT!


HEE HEE HEE...
Oops!
(-.-)
HAHAHA HAHA...
THANKS A BUNCH.
IT'S LIKE YOU'RE HERE TO CONSOLE ME!
HEY!
YOU KNOW...
I DON'T REALLY BELIEVE THAT HISHO IS BETTER THAN ME.
WE'RE JUST DIFFERENT... I'M UNIQUE.
OF COURSE, I'M NOT WITHOUT MY FLAWS.
BUT I REFUSE TO COMPROMISE MYSELF...
IN ORDER TO FIT SOME IDEAL OF A MALE DANCER.


I WANT TO RETAIN MY OWN UNIQUE PERSONALITY!
INSTEAD OF BEING A BLANK SLATE, A GENERIC SOLOIST...

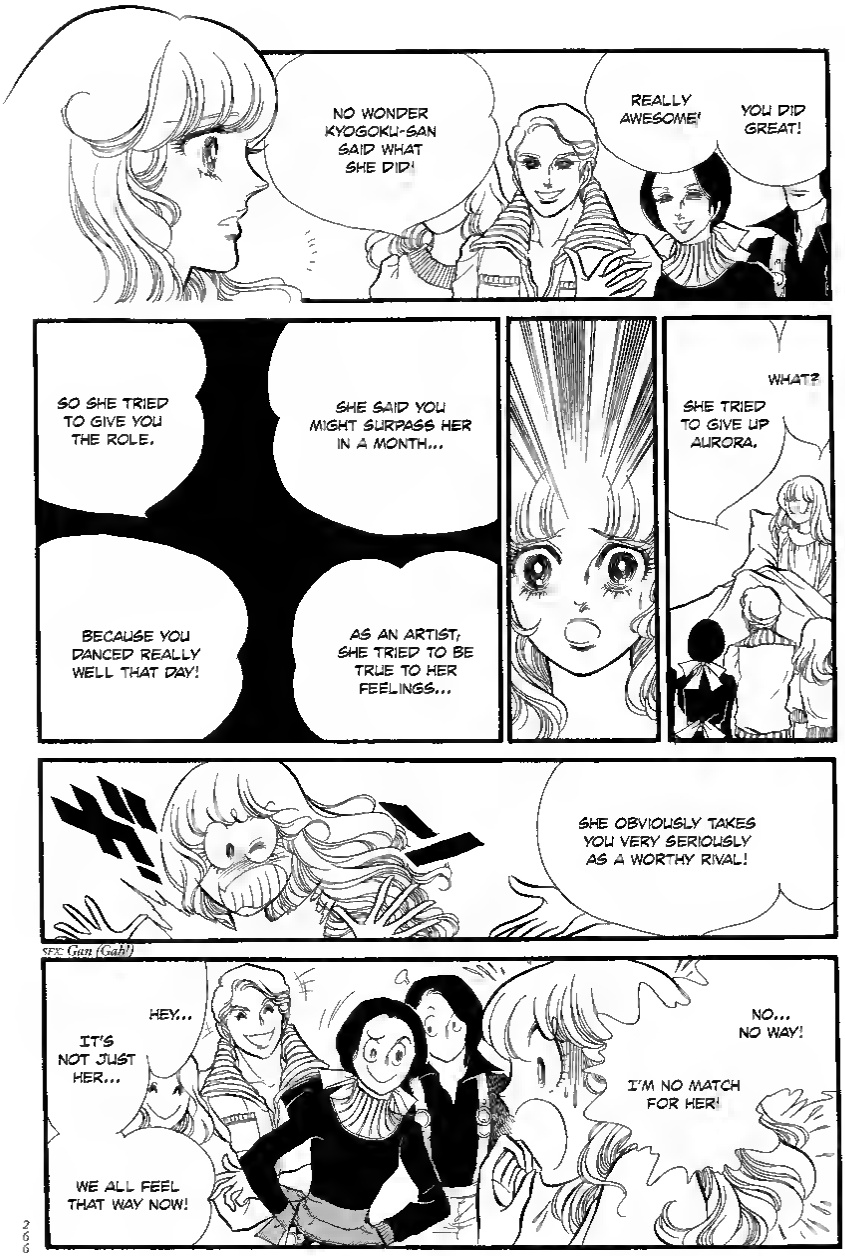
BALLET HAS BEEN ABOUT INDIVIDUALS.
BECAUSE SINCE THE VERY BEGINNING...


WE HAVE TO MAKE OUR OWN OPPORTUNITIES!
NO!
AT THE NEXT OPPOR-TUNITY...


AOI-SAN
HE REALLY KNOWS WHAT HE WANTS
SO DON'T BE DISAPPOINTED.
YOU AND I...
WE BOTH ARE GOOD... JUST NOT RIGHT FOR THOSE ROLES.

I CAN'T WAIT ANY LONGER!
ENOUGH IS ENOUGH!
ALWAYS BEING OFFERED SECOND PLACE.
FROM NOW ON, I'M CREATING MY OWN DESTINY!

AOI-SAN
SFX: Wiri wiri zawa zawa (Chatter)
...
SOUNDS LIKE THE OTHERS ARE COMING...
SO I'LL BE GOING!
LATER!
YES, I'M BETTER.
NO WONDER YOU COLLAPSED!
THE SLEEPING BEAUTY IS SUCH A DEMANDING SHOW.
FEELING BETTER?
HI, HIJIRI-SAN!
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
SFX: Batan (Bang)

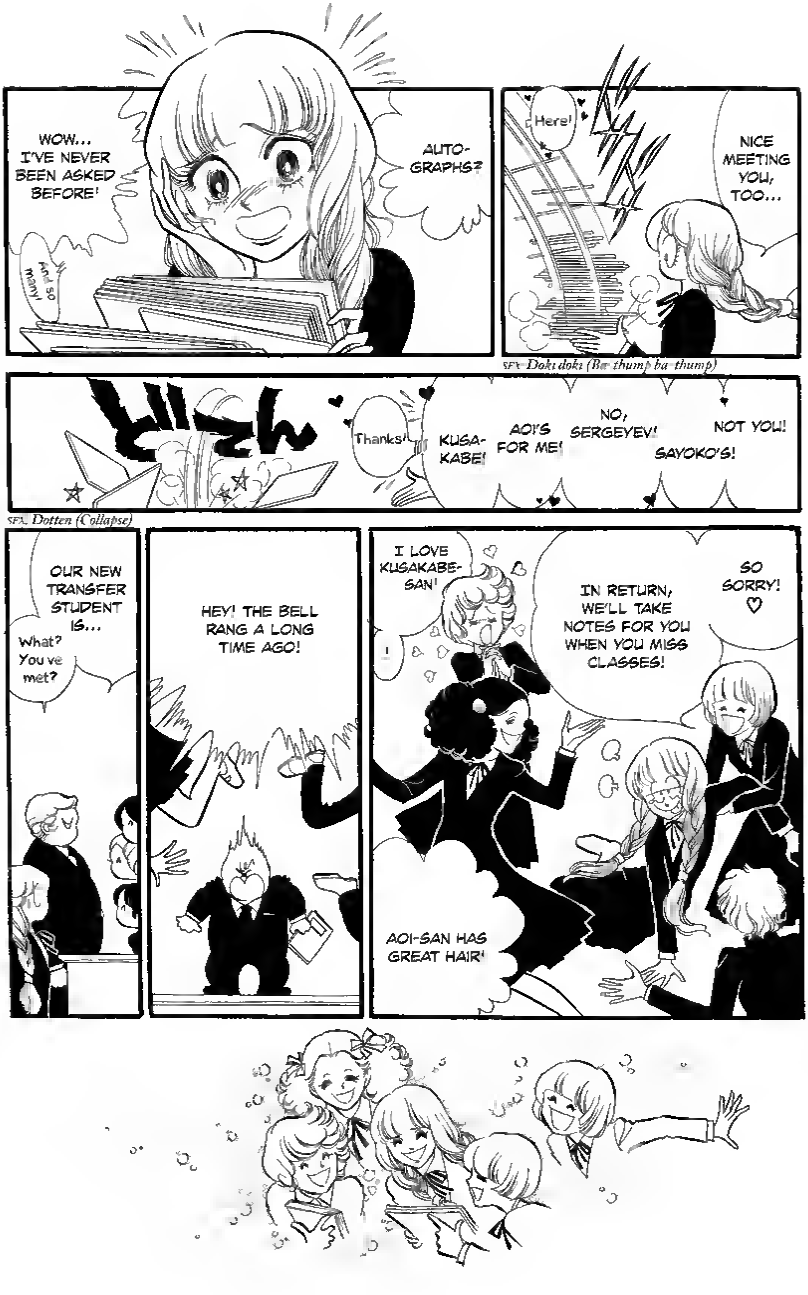

NO WONDER KYOGOKU-SAN SAID WHAT SHE DID!
REALLY AWESOME!
YOU DID GREAT!
SO SHE TRIED TO GIVE YOU THE ROLE.
SHE SAID YOU MIGHT SURPASS HER IN A MONTH...
BECAUSE YOU DANCED REALLY WELL THAT DAY!
AS AN ARTIST, SHE TRIED TO BE TRUE TO HER FEELINGS...
WHAT?
SHE TRIED TO GIVE UP AURORA.
SHE OBVIOUSLY TAKES YOU VERY SERIOUSLY AS A WORTHY RIVAL!
SFX: Gun (Gah)
HEY...
IT'S NOT JUST HER...
WE ALL FEEL THAT WAY NOW!
NO... NO WAY!
I'M NO MATCH FOR HER!

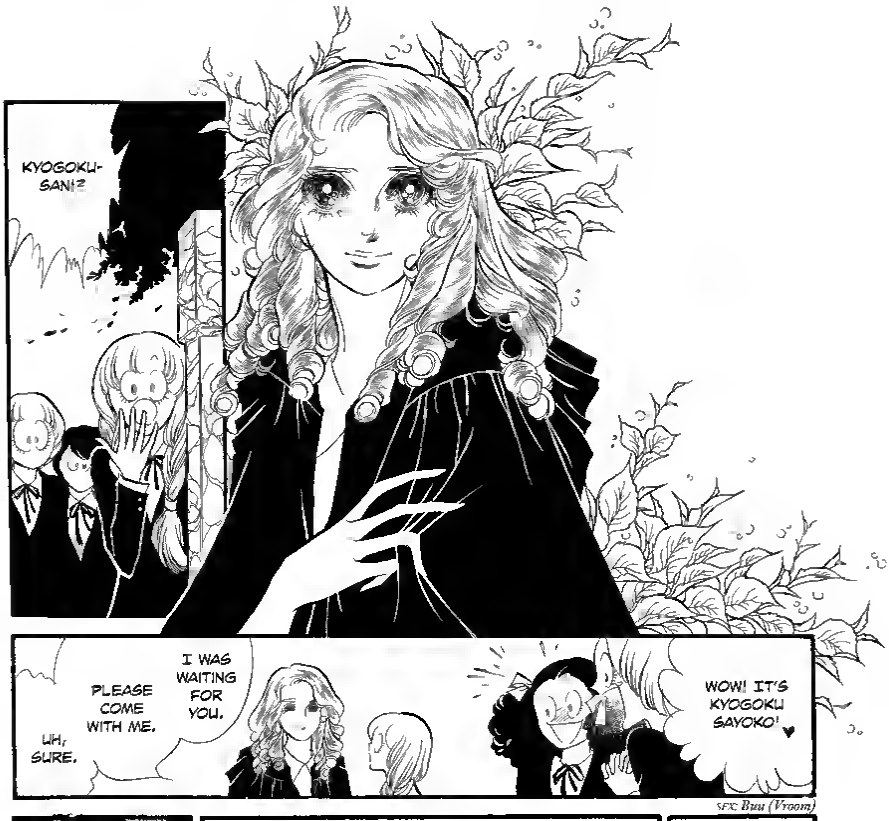
WE CAN'T AFFORD TO BE COMPLACENT.
AS THE FIRST GRADUATING CLASS, LET'S SEE WHO GROWS THE MOST!
HEY, WE'RE ALL RIVALS HERE!
WE HAVE TO WORK JUST AS HARD!
BUT...
WE WON'T BE GOING TO MOSCOW...
HAHAHA...
HAHAHA...
HAHA...
THEY'RE ALL SUCH NICE PEOPLE..
WOW...
AND WE ALL LOVE BALLET DEARLY

SFX: Chun (Chirp)
GOSH.. I TRANSFERRED TO THIS HIGH SCHOOL IN TOKYO A WHILE BACK, BUT THIS IS MY FIRST TIME TO ACTUALLY ATTEND CLASS!
Kyaa!
First Year Classroom A
HERE'S MY HOMEROOM.
I FEEL SO OUT OF PLACE!
Here goes
OOPS! SO SORRY!
SFX: Dosun (Crash)
SFX: Kacha (Click)

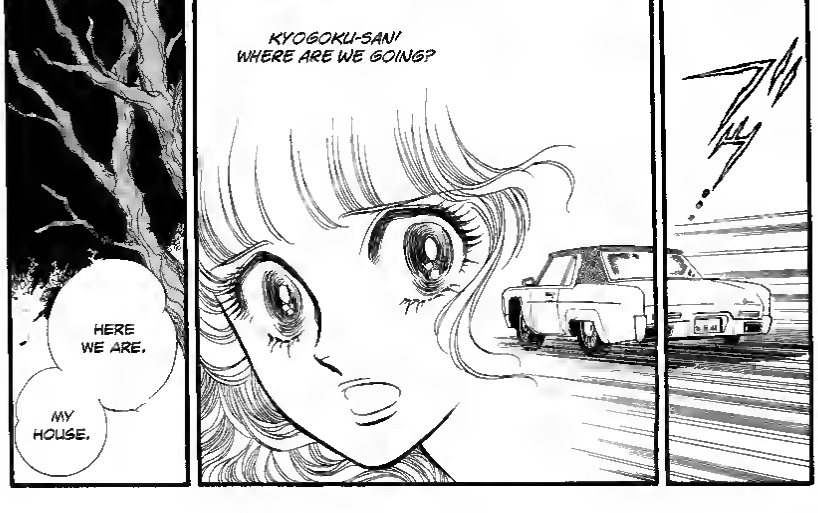
SFX: Wow! Wow! Kyaa!
SHOW ME!
ME, TOO!
WHAT IS IT?
PASS IT ON!
SHOW IT TO ME!
Uh oh!
IT LISTS WHO GOT THE ROLES!
HERE ARE THE RESULTS FOR THE SPECIAL MOSCOW PERFORMANCE HOSTED BY THE NATIONAL BALLET SCHOOL!
SHE'LL BE SITTING HERE!
NEXT TO ME!
SHE MUST HAVE THE BEST LOOKING LEGS...
AND A NICE BUTT, TOO!
PERV!
I HEARD SHE'S FABULOUS! A TYPICAL BALLERINA...
SO BEAUTIFUL, INTELLIGENT...
AND INCREDIBLY GRACEFUL!
SHE'S LOVELY!
KYOGOKU-SAN IS PRINCESS AURORA, OF COURSE!
HIJIRI MASUMI, I THINK.
HEY, ONE OF THESE STUDENTS TRANSFERRED HERE!
SFX: Kyaa! Kya!

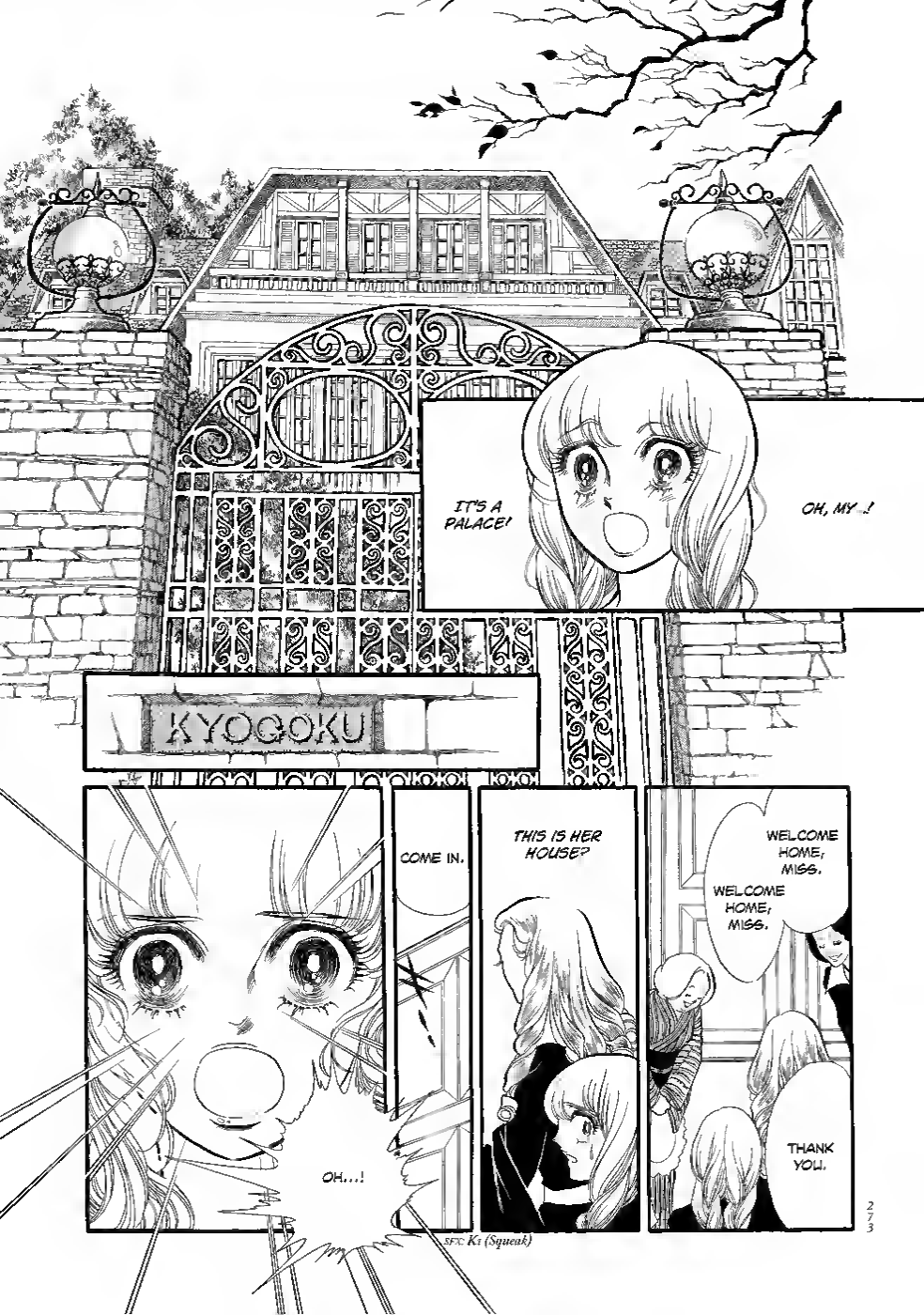
WHAT!?
YOU... ARE HIJIRI MASUMI?
Her?
WHO...
Um Ah
HUH?
That bad am I?
GORGEOUS FACE?
LONG LEGS?
GRACEFUL BODY?
THAT'S NOKO...
AND KENTARO.
I'M MICCHI.
HIROMI.
YOKO.
WE'RE SO HAPPY YOU'RE IN OUR CLASS!
NICE TO MEET YOU!
HAHAHA...
I guess!
WELL, THERE ARE ALWAYS EXCEPTIONS!
SORRY!
NOTHING PERSONAL.
LOOKS AREN'T EVERYTHING, RIGHT?

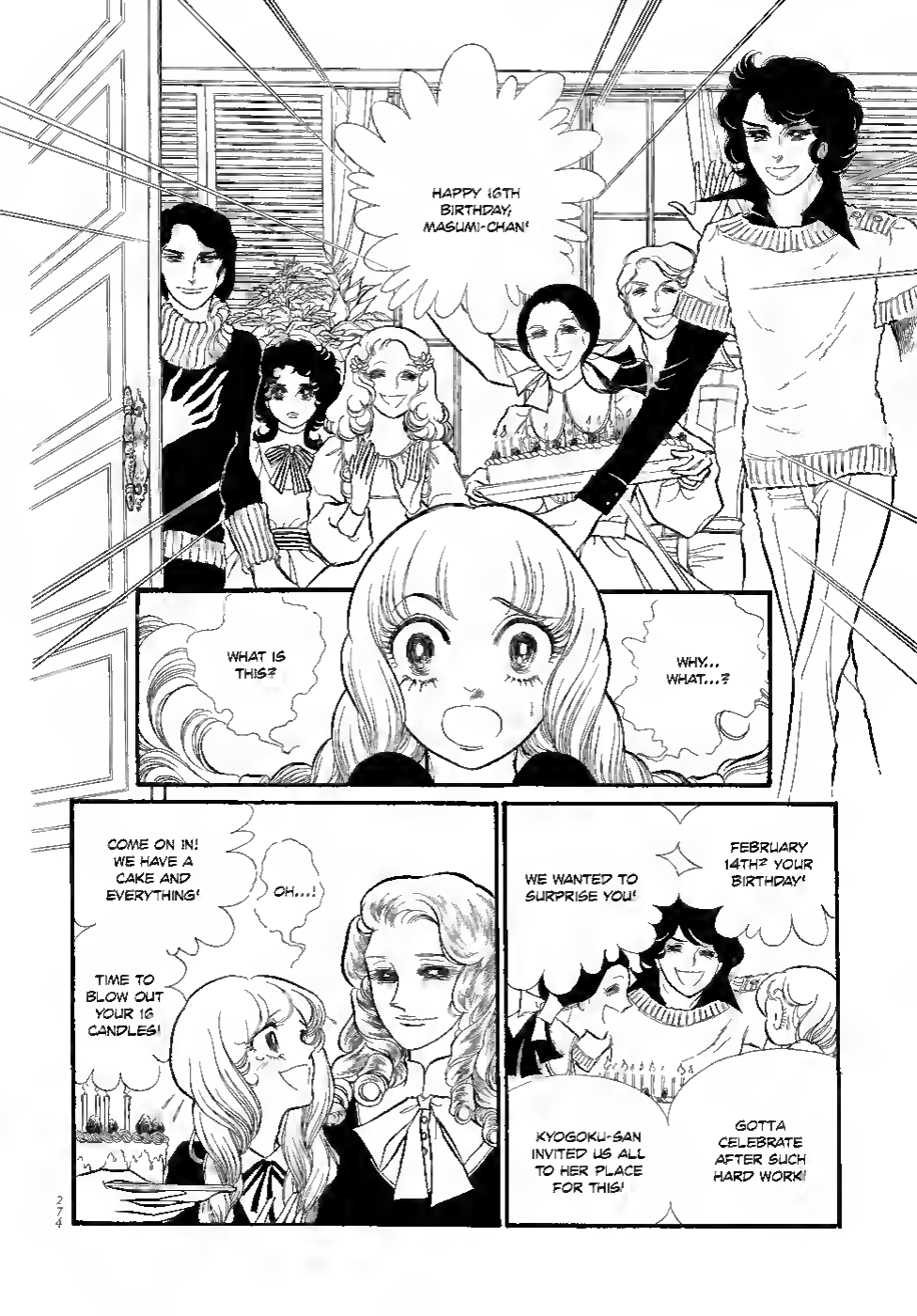

WOW... I'VE NEVER BEEN ASKED BEFORE!
AUTO-GRAPHS?
and so many
Here!
NICE MEETING YOU, TOO...
SFX: Doki doki (Ba-thump ba-thump)
Thanks!
KUSA-KABE!
AOI'S FOR ME!
NO, SERGEYEV!
NOT YOU!
SAYOKO'S!
SFX: Dotten (Collapse)
OUR NEW TRANSFER STUDENT IS...
What? You've met?
HEY! THE BELL RANG A LONG TIME AGO!
I LOVE KUSAKABE-SAN!
IN RETURN, WE'LL TAKE NOTES FOR YOU WHEN YOU MISS CLASSES!
SO SORRY! ♡
AOI-SAN HAS GREAT HAIR!



SFX: Buu (Vroom)

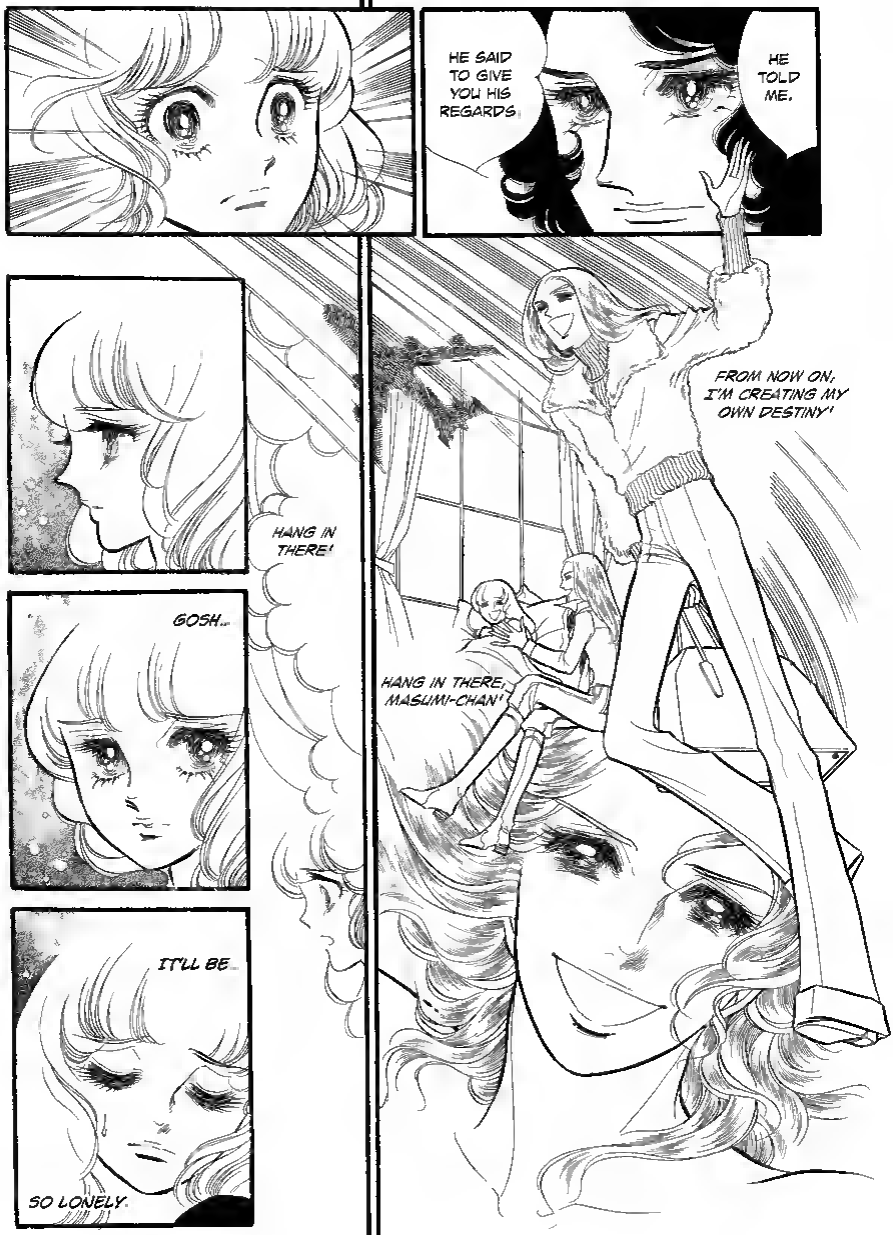



KYOGOKU
IT'S A PALACE!
OH, MY !
COME IN.
OH...!
THIS IS HER HOUSE?
WELCOME HOME, MISS.
WELCOME HOME, MISS.
THANK YOU.


HAPPY 16TH BIRTHDAY, MASUMI-CHAN!
WHAT IS THIS?
WHY... WHAT...?
COME ON IN! WE HAVE A CAKE AND EVERYTHING!
OH...!
TIME TO BLOW OUT YOUR 16 CANDLES!
WE WANTED TO SURPRISE YOU!
FEBRUARY 14TH? YOUR BIRTHDAY!
KYOGOKU-SAN INVITED US ALL TO HER PLACE FOR THIS!
GOTTA CELEBRATE AFTER SUCH HARD WORK!

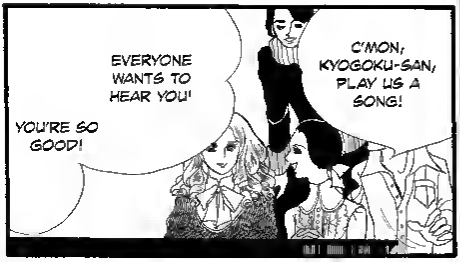
SFX: *Pachi pachi pachi pachi pachi (Clap clap clap clap clap)*

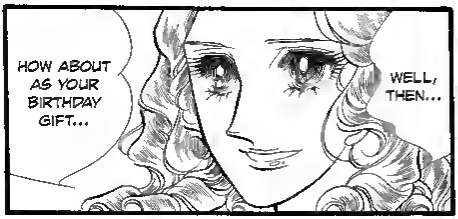
OH! AOI-SAN!
HUH? 7... 8.. SOMEONE'S MISSING
FOR MONACO TODAY.
AOI LEFT...
MASUMI-CHAN...
MONACO!?
YES...
WHEN HE LOST THE MOSCOW TRIP TO ME, HE DECIDED.
IT WAS IN THE WORKS FOR SOME TIME.
HE WENT WITH HIS OLD BALLET INSTRUCTOR.
OUR NATIONAL BALLET SCHOOL IS PROVIDING FINANCIAL AID.
SO, WHY SO SUDDEN?

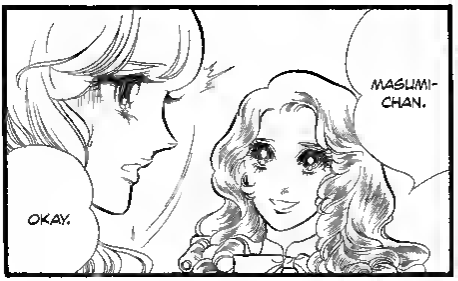

HE SAID TO GIVE YOU HIS REGARDS.
HE TOLD ME.
FROM NOW ON, I'M CREATING MY OWN DESTINY!
HANG IN THERE, MASUMI-CHAN!
HANG IN THERE!
GOSH...
IT'LL BE...
SO LONELY.

YUKA-SAN!
Haha ha!
I GUESS...
YOU LOST, TOO.
I'M GOING TO THE UNITED STATES.
THE UNITED STATES!?
YUP...
I'VE ALWAYS WANTED TO STUDY MODERN BALLET AT THE NEW YORK CITY BALLET.
Hoho
OH, PLEASE...
ME AGAINST KYOGOKU-SAN?

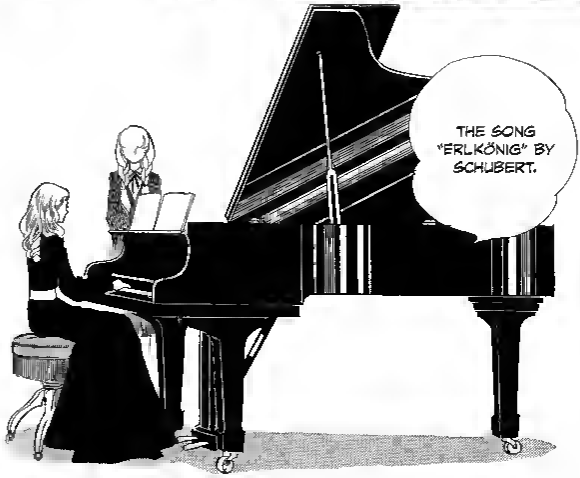
GEORGE BALANCHINE IS THERE!
THE GREAT RUSSIAN CHOREO-GRAPHER!
I JUST...
LOVE HIS WORKS LIKE *APOLLO* AND *SERENADE*.
CREATING A BALLET IS SO EXCITING!
OUR GOVERNMENT IS PROVIDING ME WITH A SCHOLARSHIP, AS AN EXCHANGE STUDENT!
BUT... BUT...
I'LL HAVE TO QUIT THIS PROGRAM, OF COURSE.
BUT... SINCE SERGEYEV-SENSEI IS GOING BACK TO MOSCOW ANYWAY...
WHAT? YOU DIDN'T KNOW?
HE HAS TO ACCOMPANY THE WINNERS.
THAT'S RIGHT!
SERGEYEV-SENSEI!!
HE'LL BE LEAVING FOR MOSCOW!

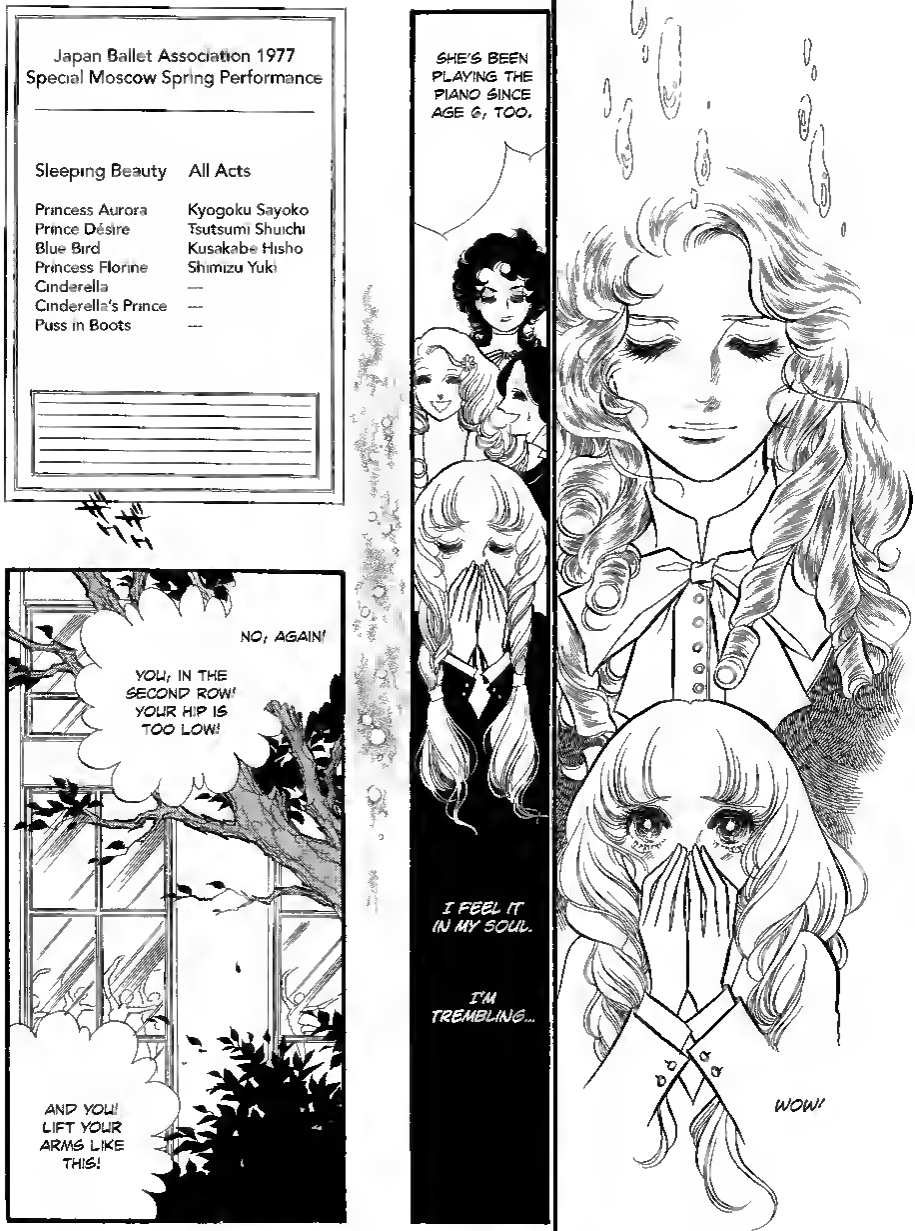

EVERYONE WANTS TO HEAR YOU!
C'MON, KYOGOKU-SAN, PLAY US A SONG!
YOU'RE SO GOOD!


HOW ABOUT AS YOUR BIRTHDAY GIFT...
WELL, THEN...

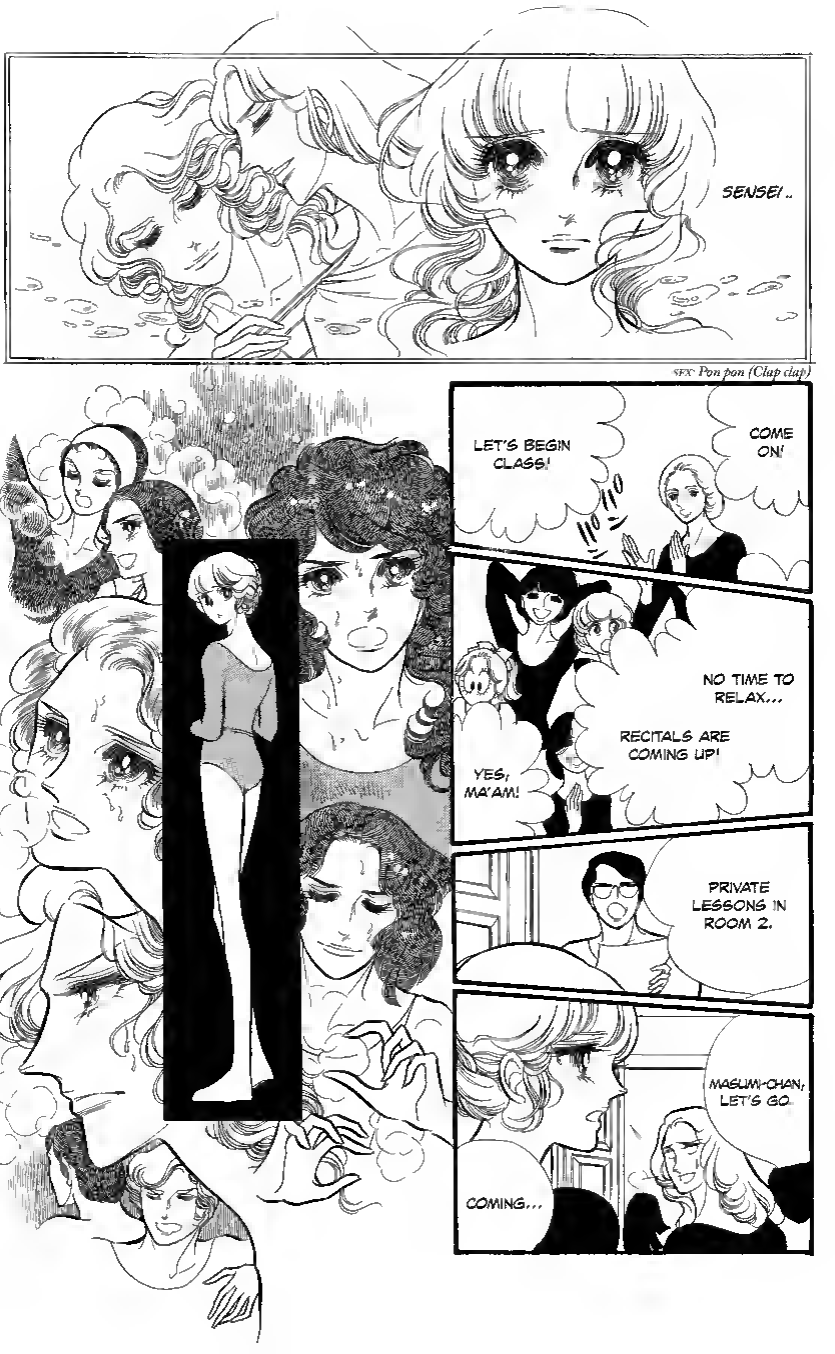

MASUMI-CHAN.
OKAY.

I'LL BE ALL ALONE.


THE SONG "ERLKÖNIG" BY SCHUBERT.

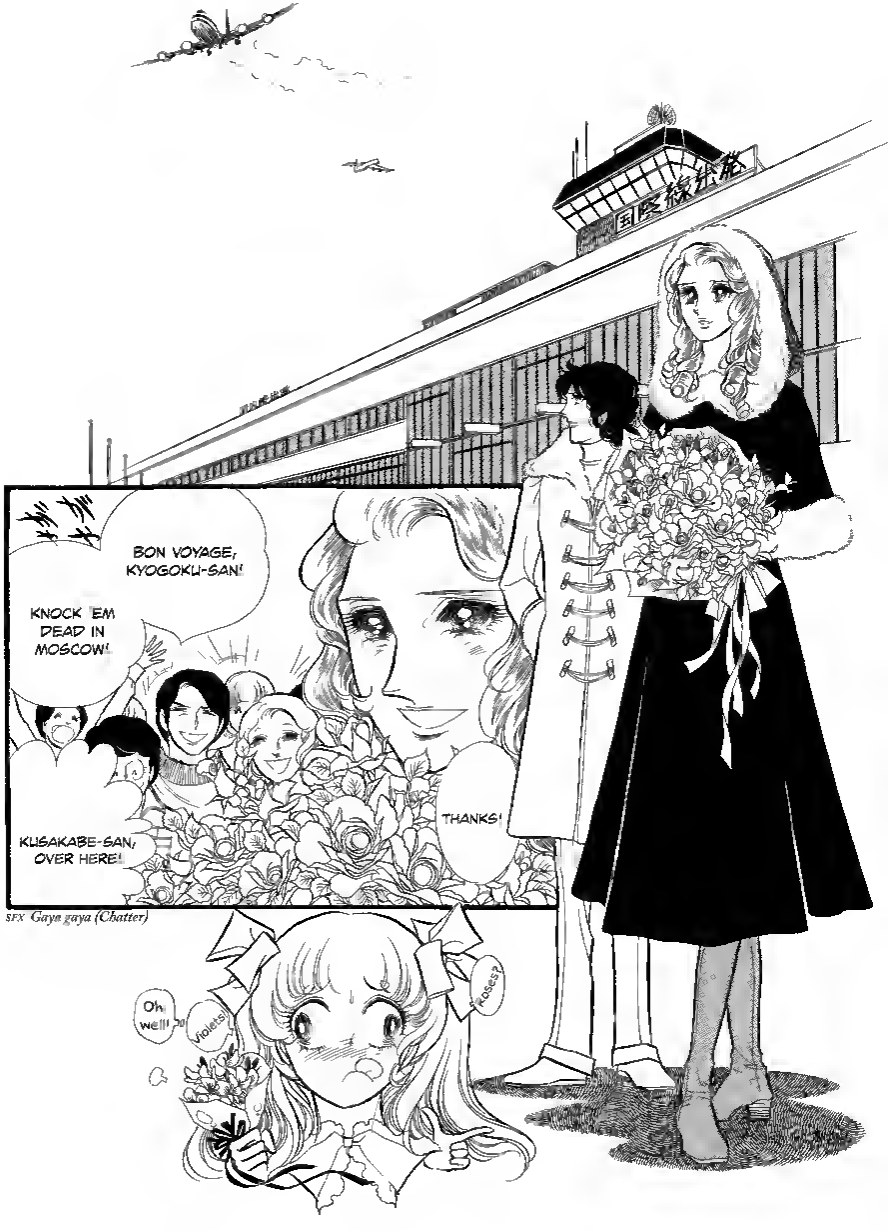

Japan Ballet Association 1977
Special Moscow Spring Performance
Sleeping Beauty All Acts
Princess Aurora Kyogoku Sayoko
Prince Désire Tsutsumi Shuichi
Blue Bird Kusakabe Hisho
Princess Florine Shimizu Yuki
Cinderella —
Cinderella's Prince —
Puss in Boots —
NO; AGAIN!
YOU, IN THE SECOND ROW! YOUR HIP IS TOO LOW!
AND YOU! LIFT YOUR ARMS LIKE THIS!
SHE'S BEEN PLAYING THE PIANO SINCE AGE 6, TOO.
I FEEL IT IN MY SOUL.
I'M TREMBLING...
WOW!

THEY'RE LEAVING IN JUST THREE DAYS.
THEY'LL KEEP PRACTICING OVER THERE.
MOVE SLOWLY.
THEY'RE REALLY PSYCHED!
WHAT AN HONOR FOR JAPAN... EVERYONE'S EXCITED!
THAT'S RIGHT!
GOOD. THE FACE ANGLE IS GOOD.
HE AND SERGEYEV-SENSEI GO WAY BACK.
THERE'S EVEN BUZZ IN MOSCOW, I HEARD!
TSUTSUMI-SAN IS OUR TOP DANCER, AFTER ALL!
GEE...
WISH I COULD GO...
I'LL SURE MISS SERGEYEV-SENSEI.


SENSEI..
SFX: Pon pon (Clap clap)
LET'S BEGIN CLASS!
COME ON!
NO TIME TO RELAX...
RECITALS ARE COMING UP!
YES, MA'AM!
PRIVATE LESSONS IN ROOM 2.
MASUMI-CHAN, LET'S GO.
COMING...

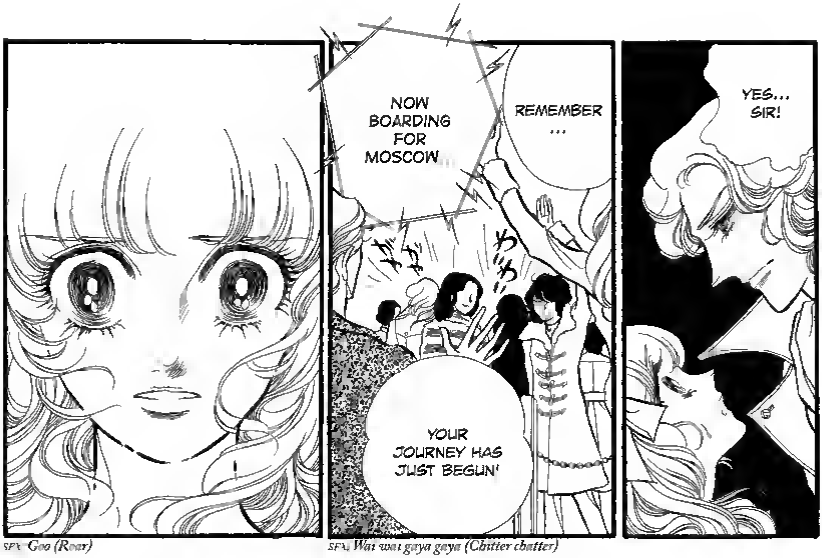
ONE BY ONE,
PIROUETTE EN DEHORS IN FRONT.
HOLD STEADY!
HIJIRI-SAN, MAIL FOR YOU!
How are you?
My sculptures will be exhibited in Tokyo next month.
DADDY!

I really look forward to seeing you then.
HAHAHA!
I'LL SEE DAD!
VERY SOON!
YOU TWO IN THE BACK! TOO SLOW!
DO NOT LAG BEHIND!
WRONG! I SAID, THAT'S WRONG!
GOOD...
LEFT LEG DOWN SLOWLY.
THE COSTUMES ARE DONE!
LEMME SEE!


国際線旅客
BON VOYAGE, KYOGOKU-SAN!
KNOCK 'EM DEAD IN MOSCOW!
KUSAKABE-SAN, OVER HERE!
THANKS!
SFX Gaya gaya (Chatter)
Oh well!
VIOLETS
ROSES?

UM... UH...
PLEASE TAKE CARE... BEST OF LUCK... REALLY!
THANK YOU.
DON'T KNOW IF THE MOSCOW BALLET ACADEMY WILL ACCEPT ME YET...
BUT IF THEY DO, I'LL SHOW THEM WHAT JAPANESE DANCERS CAN DO!
KUSAKABE-SAN...
YOU, TOO.
YOU MUSTN'T GIVE UP EITHER, OKAY?
I WON'T!

NOW BOARDING FROM GATE 22
JAPAN AIRLINES FLIGHT 135 FOR MOSCOW...
THAT'S YOUR FLIGHT!
PARDON ME!
DO NOT FORGET WHAT I SAID.
PRACTICE THE BASICS DAILY.
IT'S THE FOUNDATION FOR EVERY-THING ELSE.
MAKE SURE MY LESSONS SINK INTO YOUR BODY!
GOT THAT?

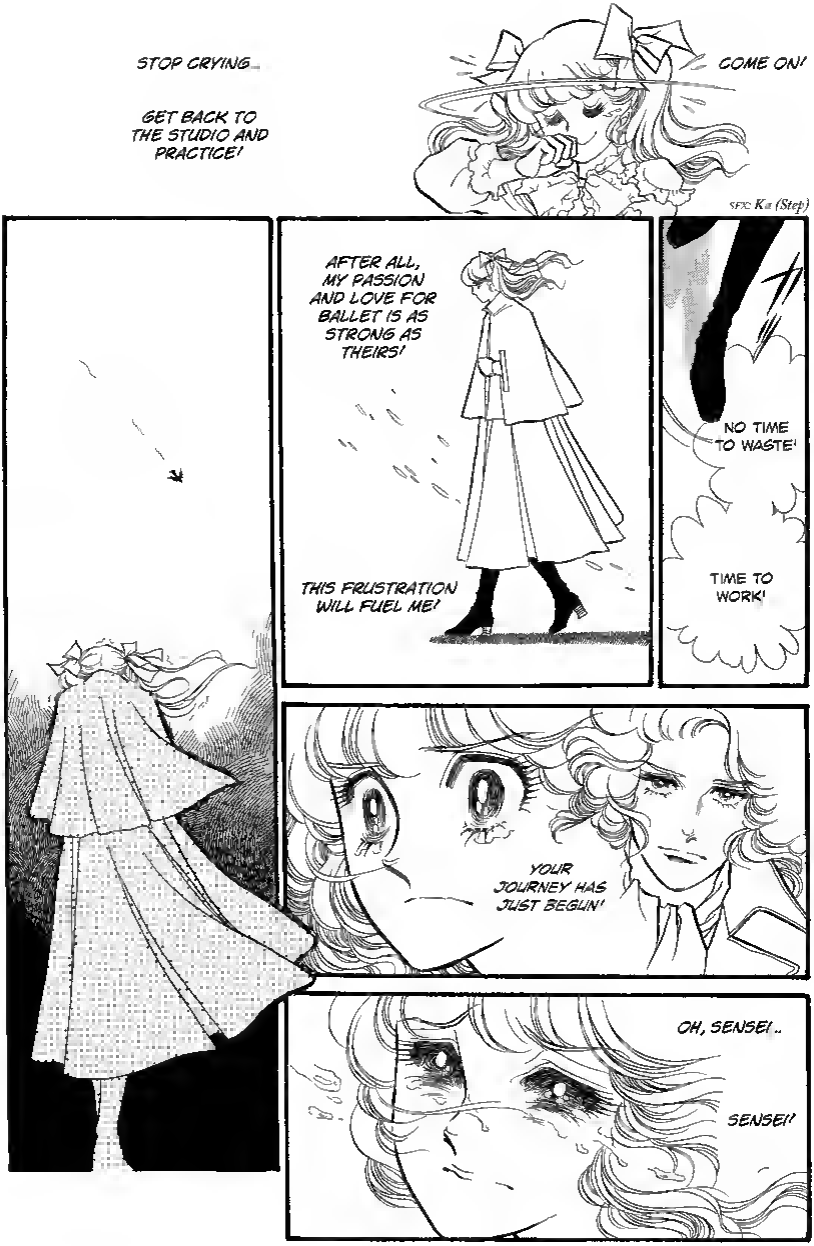


SFX: *Goo (Roar)*

SFX: *Wai-wai gaya gaya (Chitter chatter)*

SWAN
ARIYOSHI KYOKO
MARIS
SCANNER
MAYA PERRY (CMX)
TRANSLATOR
MARIS
PROOFREADER
MARIS
EDITOR
MARIS
QUALITY CONTROL
SHOUJO MANGA MANIAC
WWW.SHOUJO-MANGA.ORG

SEE YOU!
KYOGOKU-SAN...
THEY'RE ALL GONE...
KUSAKABE-SAN.. AOI-SAN AND YUKA-SAN.. EVERYONE...
IT'S JUST ME NOW.


STOP CRYING...
GET BACK TO THE STUDIO AND PRACTICE!
COME ON!
SFX: Kii (Step)
AFTER ALL, MY PASSION AND LOVE FOR BALLET IS AS STRONG AS THEIRS!
THIS FRUSTRATION WILL FUEL ME!
NO TIME TO WASTE!
TIME TO WORK!
YOUR JOURNEY HAS JUST BEGUN!
OH, SENSEI..
SENSEI!

WHO?
SOMEONE FROM OVERSEAS?
Er?
OH!
HEY..
WHO'S IN THE REHEARSAL HALL?
WAIT!?
IT'S YOU!
YOU MUST BE KYOGOKU SAYOKO!
WHO ARE YOU!?

How do you do, Kyogoku Sayoko?
I'VE HEARD SO MUCH ABOUT YOU!
MY NAME IS FERNANDO!
I'M A STUDENT FROM CUBA, AND MY TEACHER IS ALICIA ALONSO.
I'M GOING TO LONDON TO STUDY WITH THE ROYAL BALLET, BUT STOPPED BY TO MEET YOU!
WAIT... NO... UM... NOT ME...
KYOGOKU-SAN. I'M HIJIRI MASUMI!
I... I'M NOT...
WHAT?
YOU'VE GOT... THE WRONG PERSON!
KYOGOKU-SAN IS MUCH LOVELIER THAN ME, NOTHING LIKE ME...
AND SHE JUST LEFT FOR MOSCOW!

MOSCOW!?
NO... NO...
GEE... GOSH...
SO DISAP-POINTED...
Oh!
I ARRIVED IN JAPAN TOO LATE!
I'M...
I'M SO SORRY...
HIJIRI MASUMI.
MISS...?
YES...
HIJIRI-SAN...
MAY I ASK A FAVOR? I'VE BEEN ON A PLANE FOR TWO DAYS.
I NEED TO REHEARSE *PAS DE DEUX*... WILL YOU BE MY PARTNER?
YOU'RE ASKING ME?

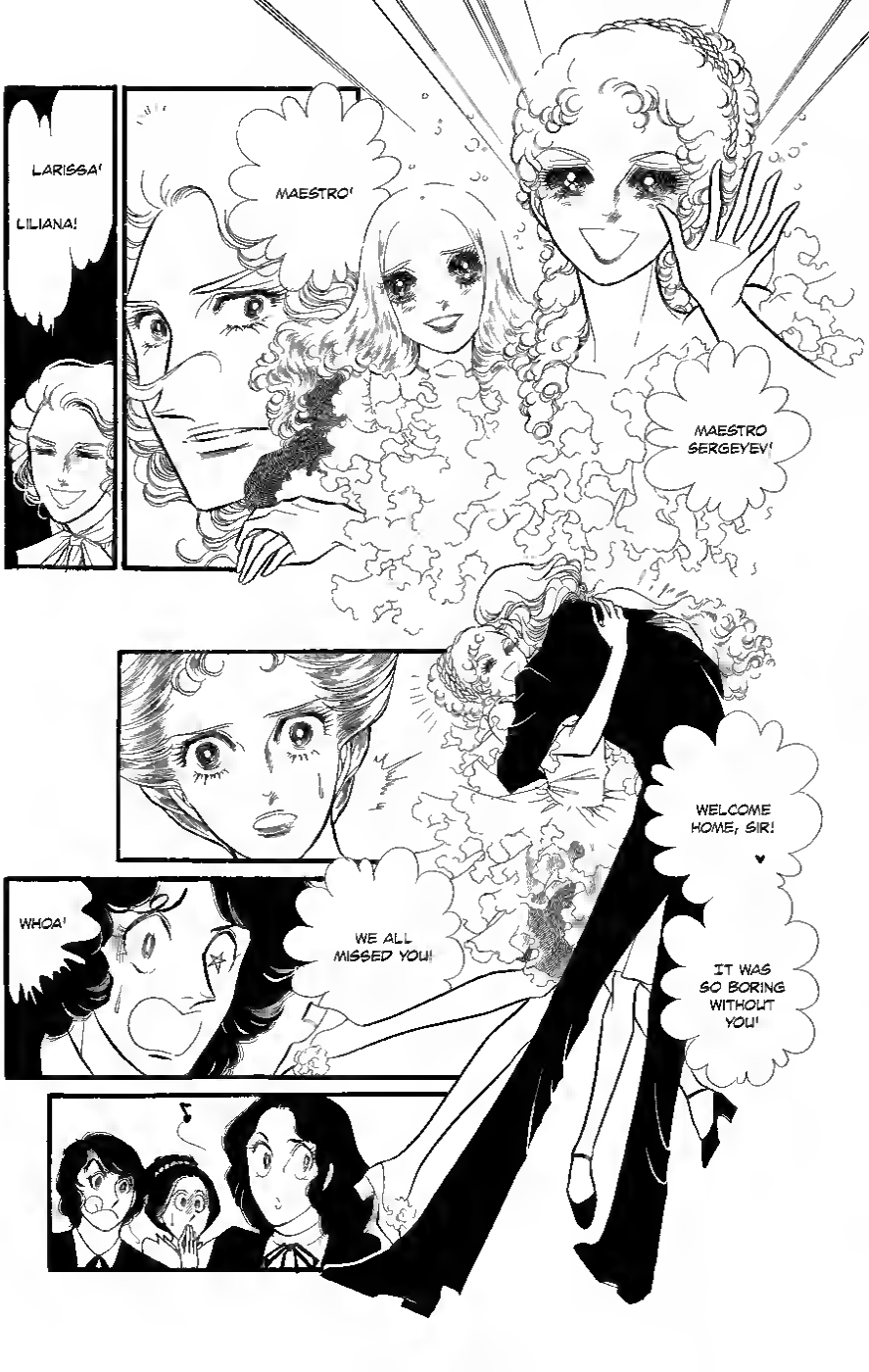
JUST A QUICK RUN-THROUGH...
OF THE ADAGIO FROM THE FIREBIRD?
OF COURSE!
UH, SURE.
WOW!
HE CAME ALL THE WAY FROM CUBA JUST TO MEET KYOGOKU-SAN!
THIS GUY DANCES SO DYNAMICALLY!

I feel good!
ARE YOU GOING ABROAD?
JAPANESE BALLET IS MAKING REMARKABLE STRIDES.
I... UH...
YOUR JAPANESE IS GOOD.
THANK YOU.
I LEARNED SO I COULD TALK TO KYOGOKU-SAN.
WE HAD A JAPANESE BALLET INSTRUCTOR AT MY SCHOOL IN CUBA.
JAPANESE DANCERS ARE ALL OVER THE WORLD.
IT'S AMAZING, SINCE JAPAN AND CUBA EMBRACED BALLET NOT TOO LONG AGO.
WHY DID SAYOKO GO TO MOSCOW?
SAY...
TO PERFORM IN THE SPECIAL SPRING SHOW, AND STUDY AT THEIR SCHOOL.
HOLY SMOKES...
THE MOSCOW BALLET ACADEMY!?
SHE'LL MEET THEIR PRODIGY DANCER, THEN!
THIS I GOTTA SEE!

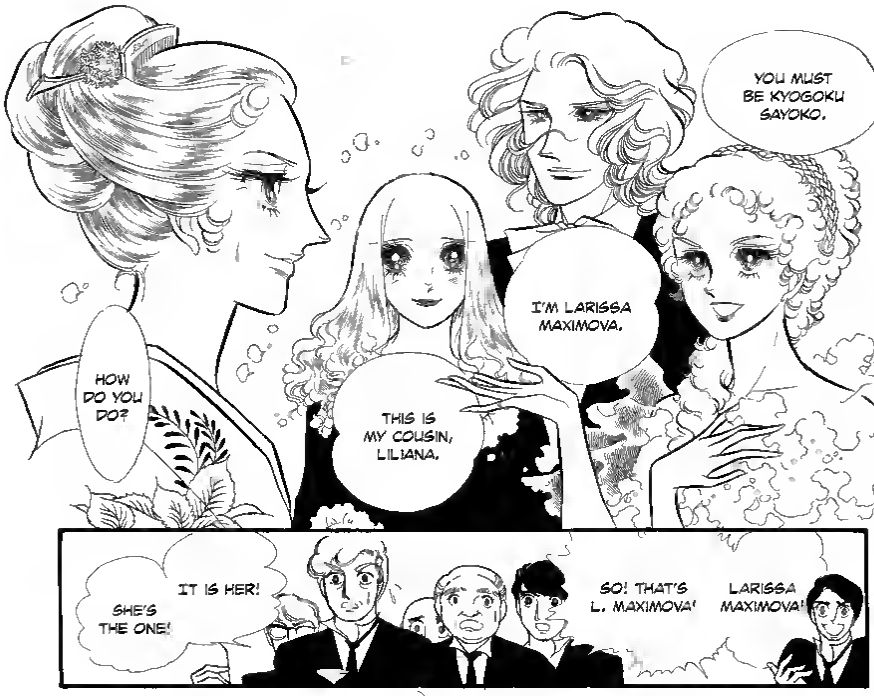
PRODIGY DANCER?
MOSCOW BALLET ACADEMY'S
SHE ENCHANTS PEOPLE...
LIKE A FAIRY CREATURE!
L. MAXIMOVA!
THE WORLD IS WAITING TO SEE HER!
SHE'S STILL A 5TH YEAR STUDENT, APPARENTLY.
HASN'T EVEN DEBUTED YET.
BUT THEY SAY SHE'S A GENIUS!
HAVE YOU HEARD?
L. MAXIMOVA?
EVEN MORE THAN NADEZHDA PAVLOVA!
SHE STANDS OUT FROM ALL THE GIFTED DANCERS IN RUSSIA...

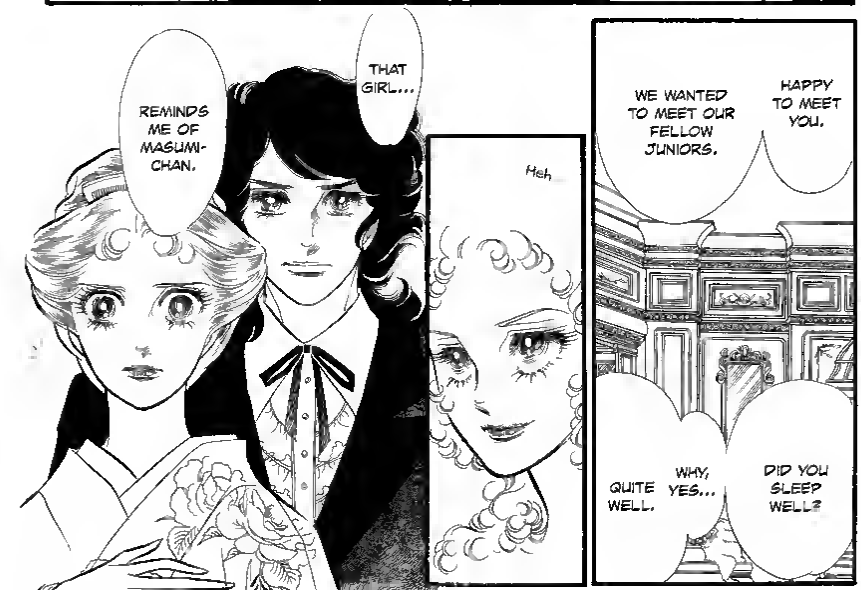
Moscow
EVERYONE SMILE.
OVER HERE!
GATHER AROUND SERGEYEV.
JUST ONE MORE!
Russian National Ballet Academy
Bolshoi Theatre
Japan Ballet Association
Moscow Performance Welcome Reception

TOMORROW WE PREPARE FOR YOUR PERFORMANCE NEXT WEEK!
RELAX FOR THE DAY.
NOW THAT WE HAVE INTRODUCED EVERYONE TO EACH OTHER...
DIRECTOR.
THANK YOU...
WE ARE ALL LOOKING FORWARD TO SEEING HOW YOU JUNIOR DANCERS FROM JAPAN WILL DO!
SO!
ALL OF MOSCOW IS WAITING.
THEIR BEST DANCERS ARE HERE!
AND THEY'RE ALL SO WARM!
THEIR WELCOME IS SO GRAND.
KUDOS TO RUSSIA!
NO WAY!
SPEAK ANY RUSSIAN?

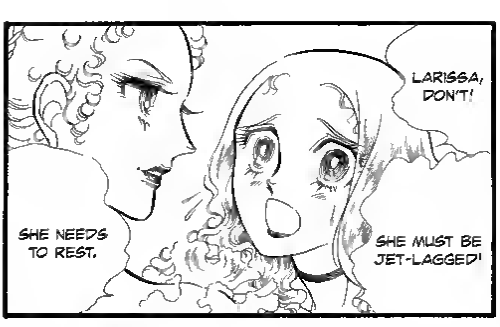

LARISSA!
LILIANA!
MAESTRO!
MAESTRO SERGEYEV!
WELCOME HOME, SIR!
WHOA!
WE ALL MISSED YOU!
IT WAS SO BORING WITHOUT YOU!

SERGEYEV IS SO POPULAR HERE!
THOSE STUDENTS... THEY'RE MOSCOW BALLET ACADEMY STUDENTS!
HEY, IS THAT..?
HE TEACHES *PAS DE DEUX* AT THE ACADEMY.
ARE THEY 4TH AND 5TH YEAR STUDENTS?
HER!
SHE'S THE PRODIGY OF MOSCOW!
OH!
I HEARD THAT SHE WAS ONLY 13 WHEN THE BALLET CRITICS FIRST RAVED ABOUT HER!
IT COULD BE HER...
IF HER NAME IS...
L. MAXIMOVA.
MAXIMOVA IS SERGEYEV'S FIRST PROTÉGÉE.
SHE HAS BEAUTIFUL CURLY HAIR.

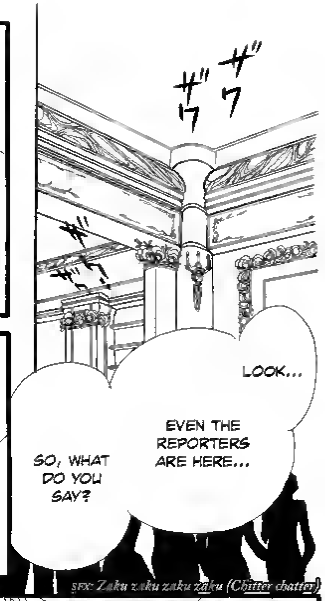

YOU MUST BE KYOGOKU SAYOKO.
I'M LARISSA MAXIMOVA.
THIS IS MY COUSIN, LILIANA.
HOW DO YOU DO?
IT IS HER! SHE'S THE ONE!
SO! THAT'S L. MAXIMOVA'
LARISSA MAXIMOVA!

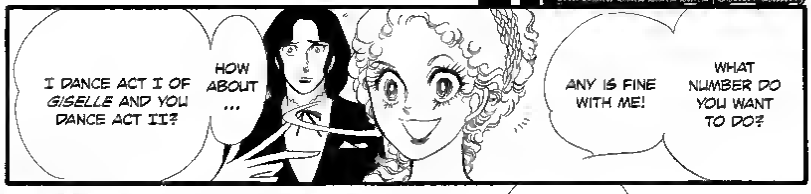

THAT GIRL...
REMINDS ME OF MASUMI-CHAN.
Heh
HAPPY TO MEET YOU.
WE WANTED TO MEET OUR FELLOW JUNIORS.
DID YOU SLEEP WELL?
WHY, YES... QUITE WELL.

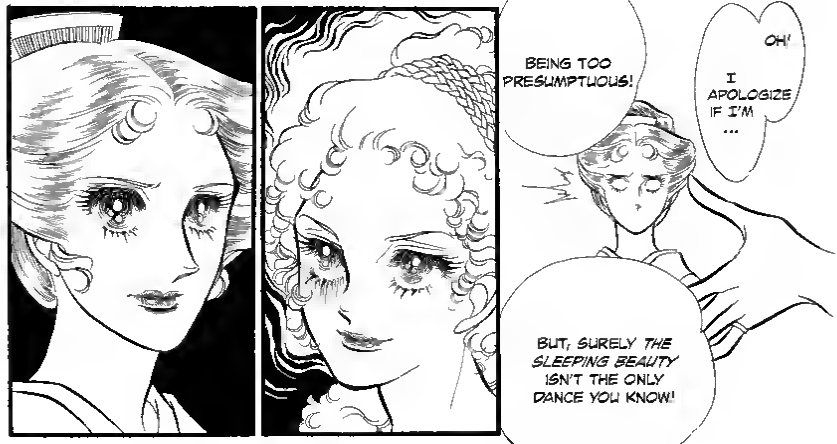
YES, SHE DOES.
LET'S DANCE...
FOR EVERYONE NOW...
AS A SHOW OF FRIENDSHIP!
SAY!
I'VE GOT A GREAT SUGGESTION!
SINCE WE'RE BOTH THE BEST JUNIOR DANCERS...
OF OUR COUNTRIES...

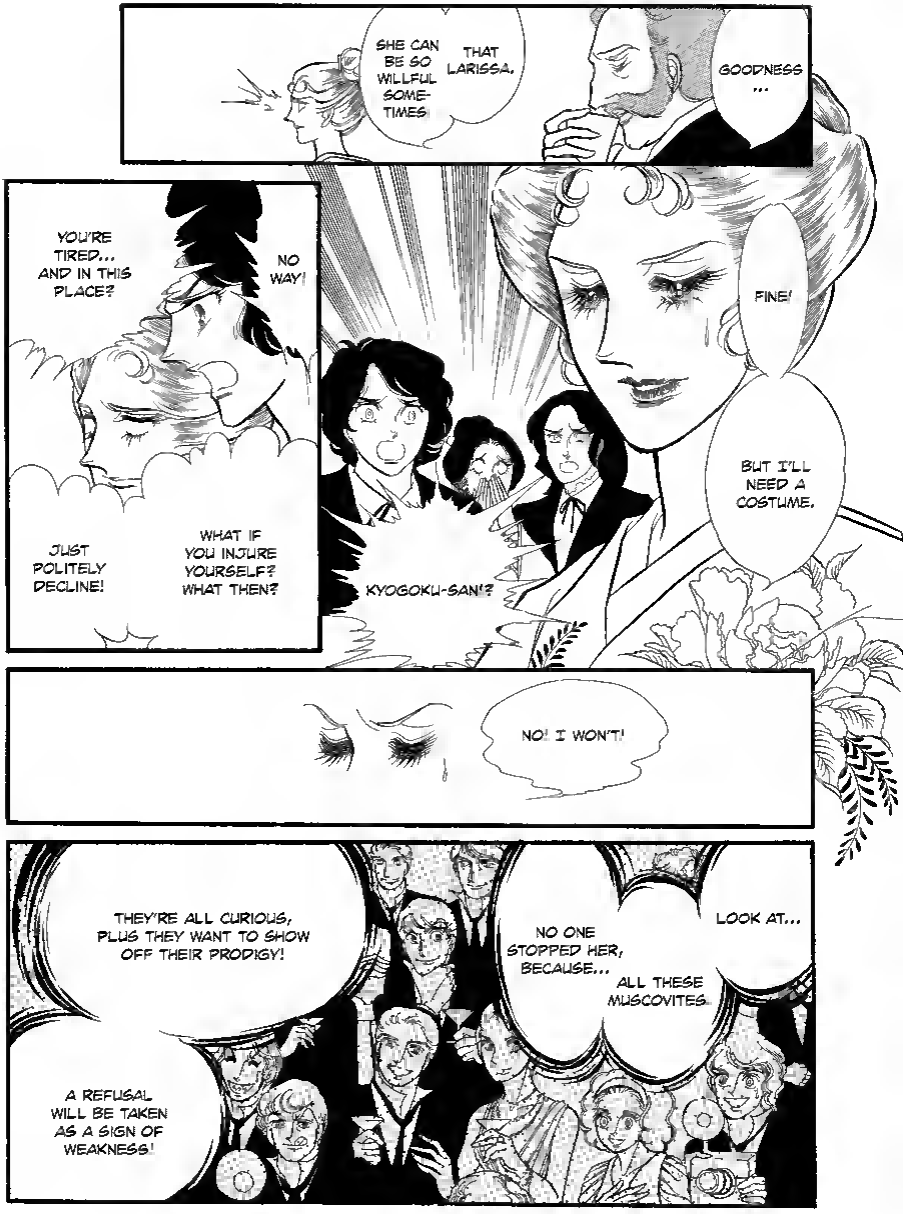

LARISSA, DON'T!
SHE NEEDS TO REST.
SHE MUST BE JET-LAGGED!

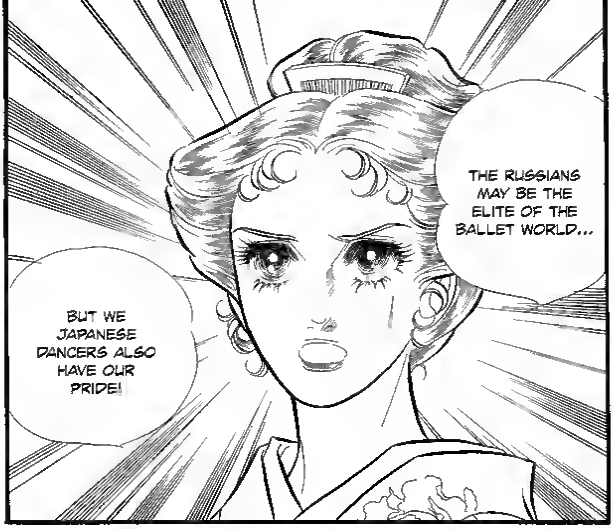
BUT SHE JUST SAID SHE GOT PLENTY OF SLEEP.
OH...
SHE'S FINE! SHE JUST SAID SO HERSELF.
YES, BUT...

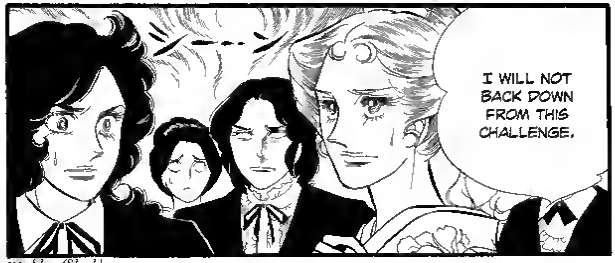

LOOK...
EVEN THE REPORTERS ARE HERE...
SO, WHAT DO YOU SAY?
SFX: Zaku zaku zaku zaku (Chitter chatter)


I DANCE ACT I OF *GISELLE* AND YOU DANCE ACT II?
HOW ABOUT ...
ANY IS FINE WITH ME!
WHAT NUMBER DO YOU WANT TO DO?

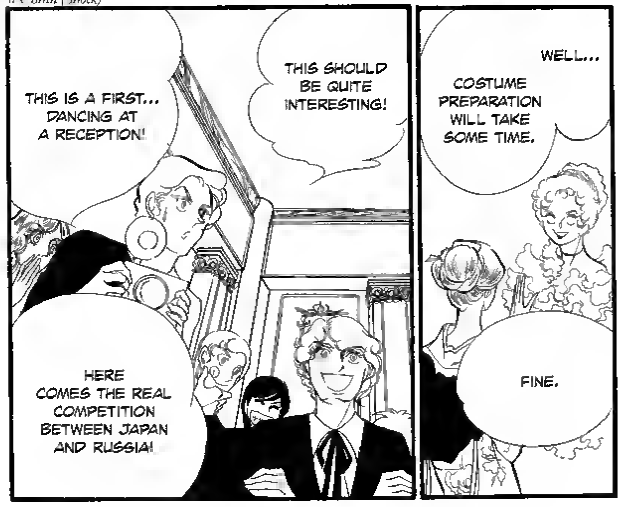

BEING TOO PRESUMPTUOUS!
OH! I APOLOGIZE IF I'M ...
BUT, SURELY *THE SLEEPING BEAUTY* ISN'T THE ONLY DANCE YOU KNOW!


GOODNESS...
THAT LARISSA.
SHE CAN BE SO WILLFUL SOMETIMES
FINE!
BUT I'LL NEED A COSTUME.
KYOGOKU-SAN!?
NO WAY!
YOU'RE TIRED... AND IN THIS PLACE?
WHAT IF YOU INJURE YOURSELF? WHAT THEN?
JUST POLITELY DECLINE!
NO! I WON'T!
LOOK AT...
ALL THESE MUSCOVITES
NO ONE STOPPED HER, BECAUSE...
THEY'RE ALL CURIOUS, PLUS THEY WANT TO SHOW OFF THEIR PRODIGY!
A REFUSAL WILL BE TAKEN AS A SIGN OF WEAKNESS!





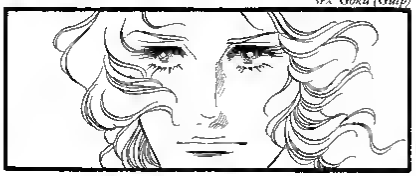
SFX: *Shin (Shock)*


THIS IS A FIRST... DANCING AT A RECEPTION!
THIS SHOULD BE QUITE INTERESTING!
HERE COMES THE REAL COMPETITION BETWEEN JAPAN AND RUSSIA!
WELL... COSTUME PREPARATION WILL TAKE SOME TIME.
FINE.

SFX: Oro ore (Panic)
THEY EVEN KEPT HER HIDDEN FROM THE RUSSIAN MEDIA!
WE'LL GET TO SEE THE SECRET WEAPON OF THE MOSCOW BALLET ACADEMY!
WOW! HOW UNEXPECTED!
MAESTRO ...
WHAT'S HE UP TO?
LOOK AT THE DIRECTOR.
HEY...

Giselle, a ballet in two acts. Composed by Adolphe Adam. First performed at the Opera Le Peletier in Paris, France in 1841. This ballet was inspired by Heinrich Heine's work, *De l'Allemagne*, about the legend of the wills, ghosts of young maidens who died of heartbreak before marriage, and whose spirits escape from their graves, entice men into the forest, and make them dance to death. Giselle is a young peasant woman who falls in love with Albrecht unaware that he is a prince, and kills herself when she learns he is betrothed to a princess. However, even as a spirit, she continues to love and protect him.

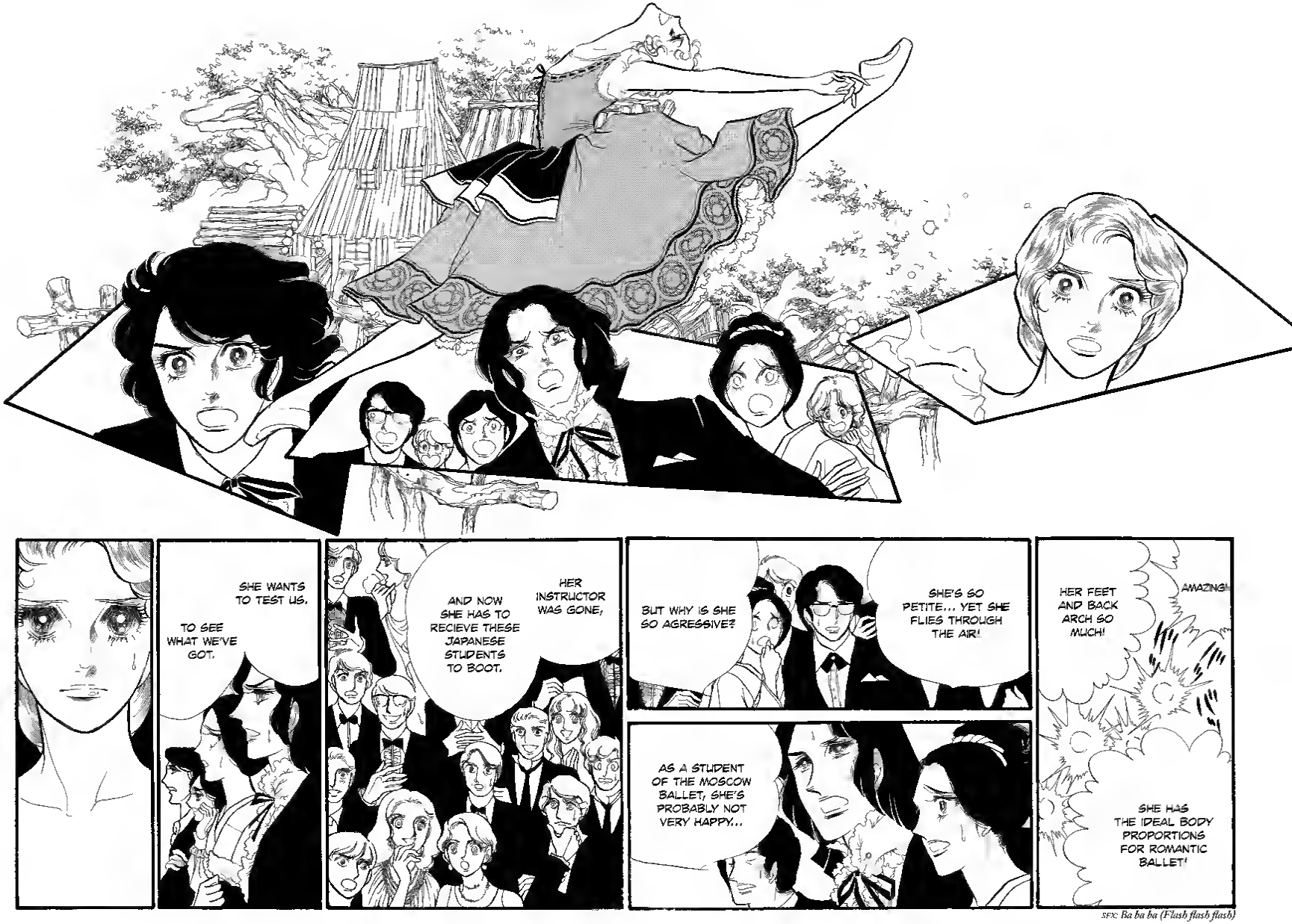
SFX: Goku (Gulp)



The main character, Giselle, appears as a young peasant maiden in Act I, and a spirit in Act II. The charm of this ballet lies in how the lead female dancer is able to show the contrast of these two roles

Generally, dancers who do well in Act I do not do as well in Act II, and vice versa. It is rare for a dancer to be able to perform both roles equally well

If one dancer performs her role poorly, it could be devastating, for she would end up making her competitor look good.


SHE WANTS TO TEST US.
TO SEE WHAT WE'VE GOT.
HER INSTRUCTOR WAS GONE,
AND NOW SHE HAS TO RECIEVE THESE JAPANESE STUDENTS TO BOOT.
BUT WHY IS SHE SO AGRESSIVE?
SHE'S SO PETITE... YET SHE FLIES THROUGH THE AIR!
AS A STUDENT OF THE MOSCOW BALLET, SHE'S PROBABLY NOT VERY HAPPY...
HER FEET AND BACK ARCH SO MUCH!
AMAZING!
SHE HAS THE IDEAL BODY PROPORTIONS FOR ROMANTIC BALLET!

SFX: *Ba ba ba (Flash flash flash)*

EN POINTE WITH HER LEFT, RONDE DE JAMBE WITH HER RIGHT, AND ALL AT A SLANTED ANGLE!
DID YOU SEE THAT!?
IT'S AS IF SHE HAS WINGS!
SFX: Ba ba ba ba (Flash flash flash flash)
ALL THIS TECHNIQUE, AND SHE'S STILL SO YOUNG!
YET, SHE LOOKS LIKE A YOUNG VILLAGE MAIDEN!
NOT SINCE CARLA FRACCI HAVE WE SEEN SUCH A GLORIOUS GISELLE!
SFX: Ooh!

AN ABSOLUTE GENIUS!
...!
SHE'S A PRODIGY!
Wow...
Wow! Wow!
Ah!
Wow! Wow!
Wow! Wow!
EXCELLENT!
EXCELLENT!

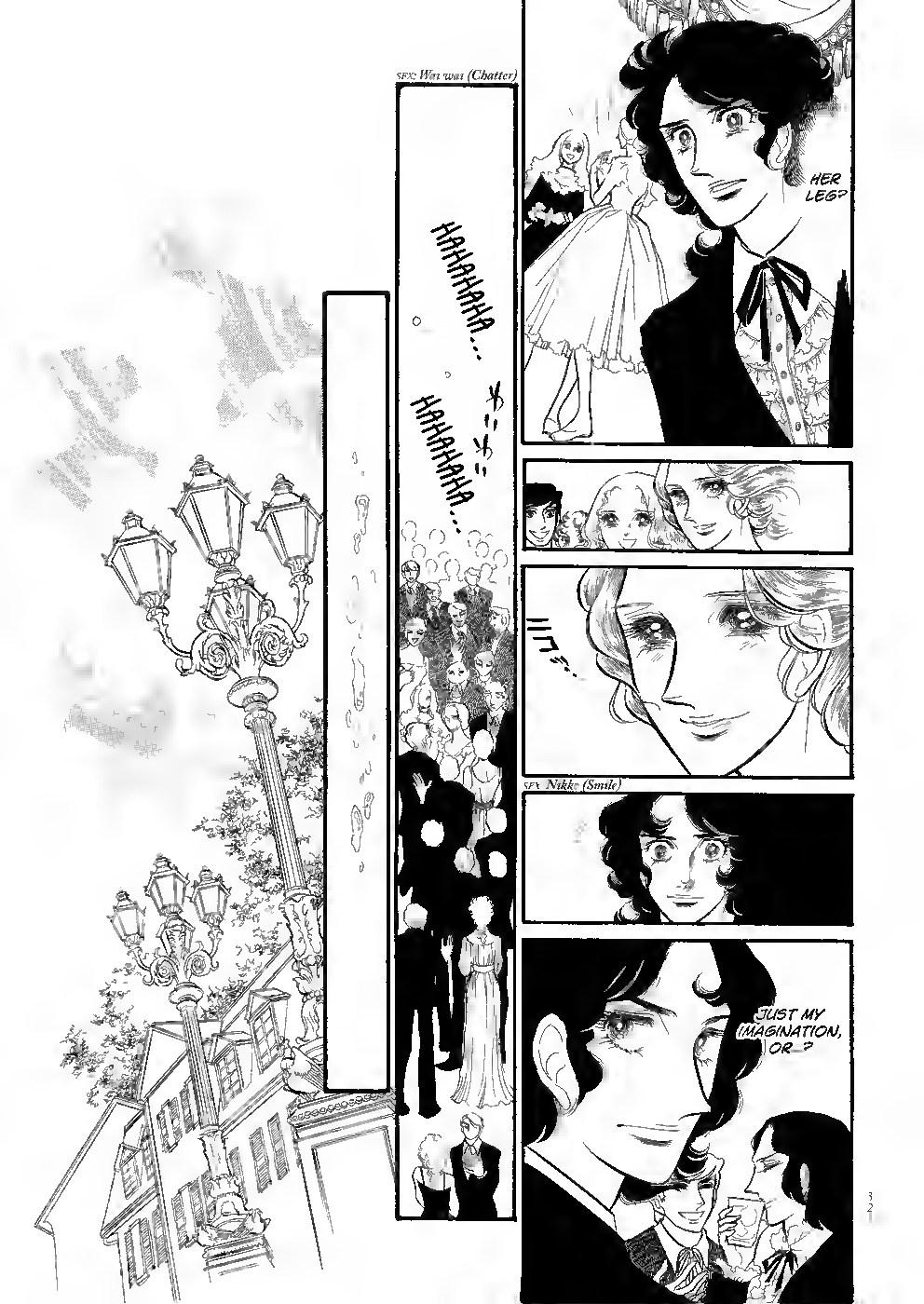
Kyogoku Sayoko begins to dance, burdened by the expectations of both the Muscovites, as well as the Japan Ballet Association.
SFX: Shin (Tense)

ドク…
sfx Goku (Gulp)

LOVELY...
HOW LOVELY!
OH...!
SFX: Pachi pachi (Clap clap)
WE WELCOME YOU!
THANK YOU FOR COMING TO MOSCOW!
Sigh
WASN'T SHE BEAUTIFUL?
SURELY YOU AGREE?
SAY SOMETHING, LARISSA!
OH, LARISSA!
LARISSA!
NO, THANK YOU!

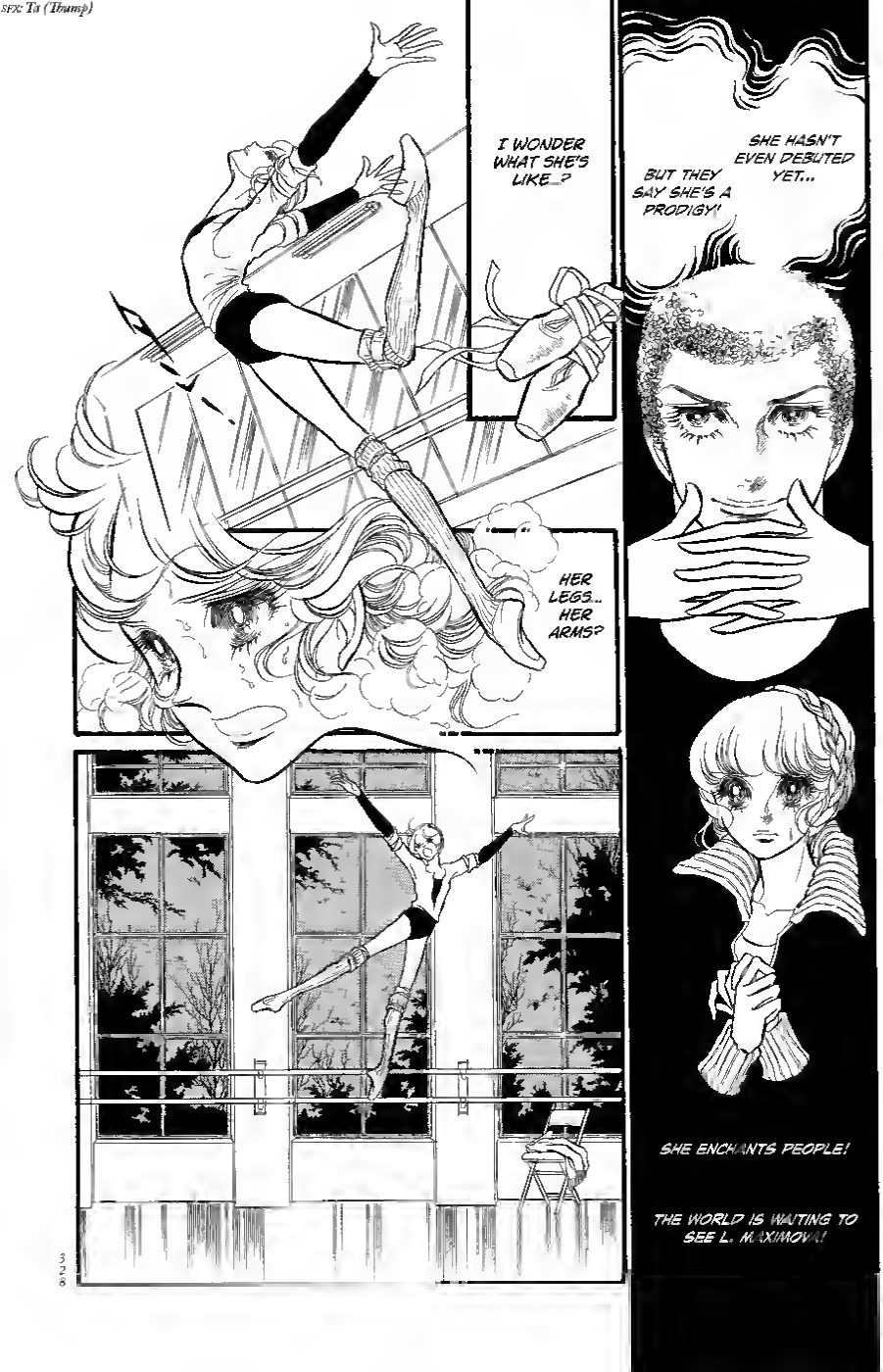
YOU'RE EXCEPTIONAL, FOR A JAPANESE.
AS MUCH AS I HATE TO ADMIT IT...
SFX Tsuka tsuka tsuka (Thump thump thump)
SFX Pachi pachi pachi pachi (Clap clap clap clap)
SFX Wow! Wow!
WHO WAS YOUR TEACHER?
ABSOLUTELY SUPERB ROLE ANALYSIS!
YOUR INTERPRETATION OF GISELLE WAS GREAT!
SAYOKO...
HOW TOUCHING! AND BEWITCHING!

SFX: Ba ba ba (Flash flash flash)
TSUTSUMI-SAN...
SFX: Wai wai wai (Chitter chatter)
HOW EXCITING THE PERFORMANCE WILL BE!
AND OF COURSE, THEY'RE WELCOME TO STUDY AT THE ACADEMY, TOO!
YOUR DANCERS ARE MUCH BETTER THAN WE EXPECTED!
DO YOU THINK THIS MEANS...
RUSSIA HAS ACCEPTED THE JAPANESE JUNIORS?
WHO KNOWS... THE THEATER DIRECTOR COULD MAKE TROUBLE.
I THINK SAYOKO MANAGED TO STUN EVEN THE BOLSHOI ELITE!

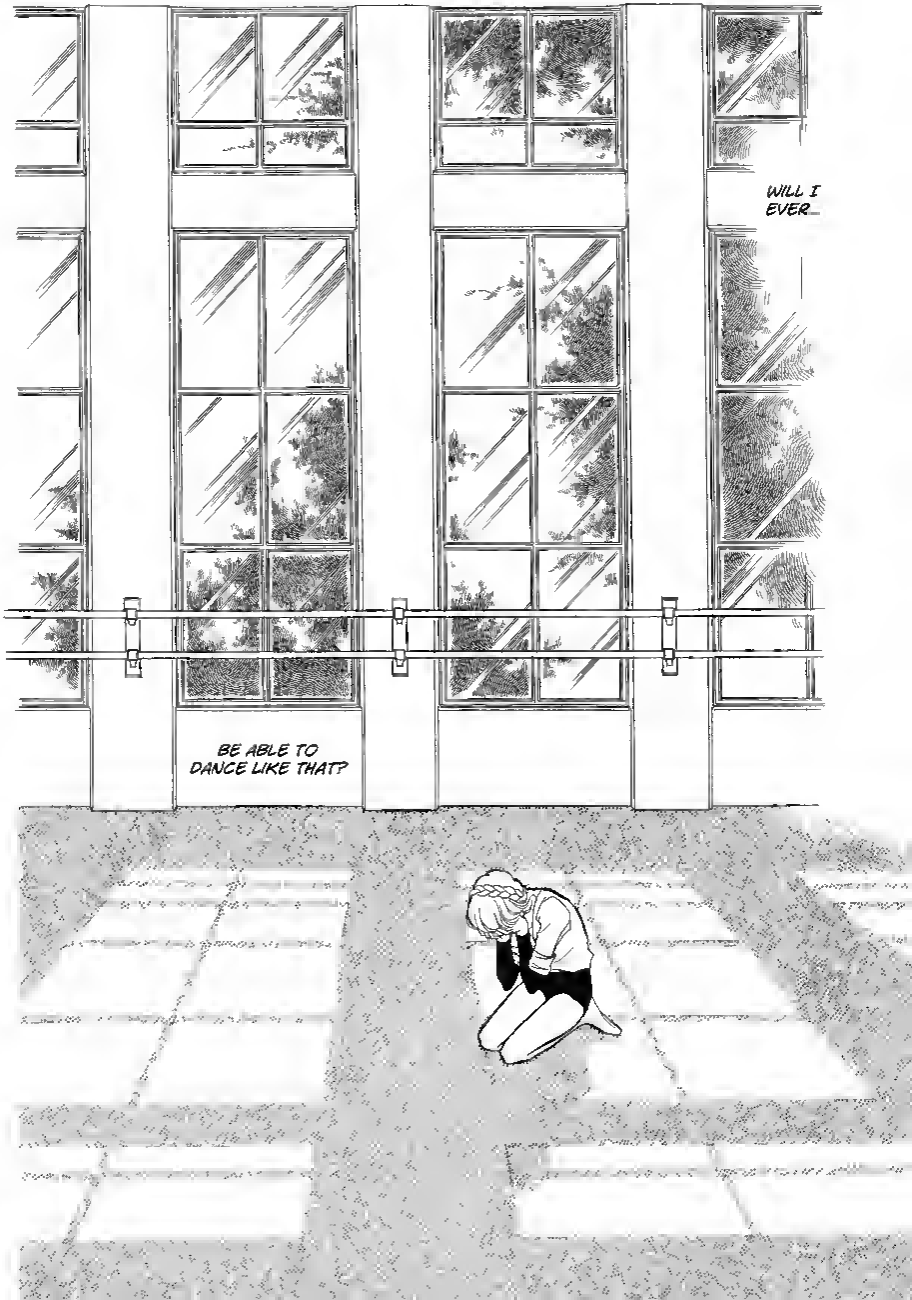

SFX: Wa wa (Chatter)
HAHAHAHA...
HAHAHAHA...
HER LEG?
SFX: Nikko (Smile)
JUST MY IMAGINATION, OR—?

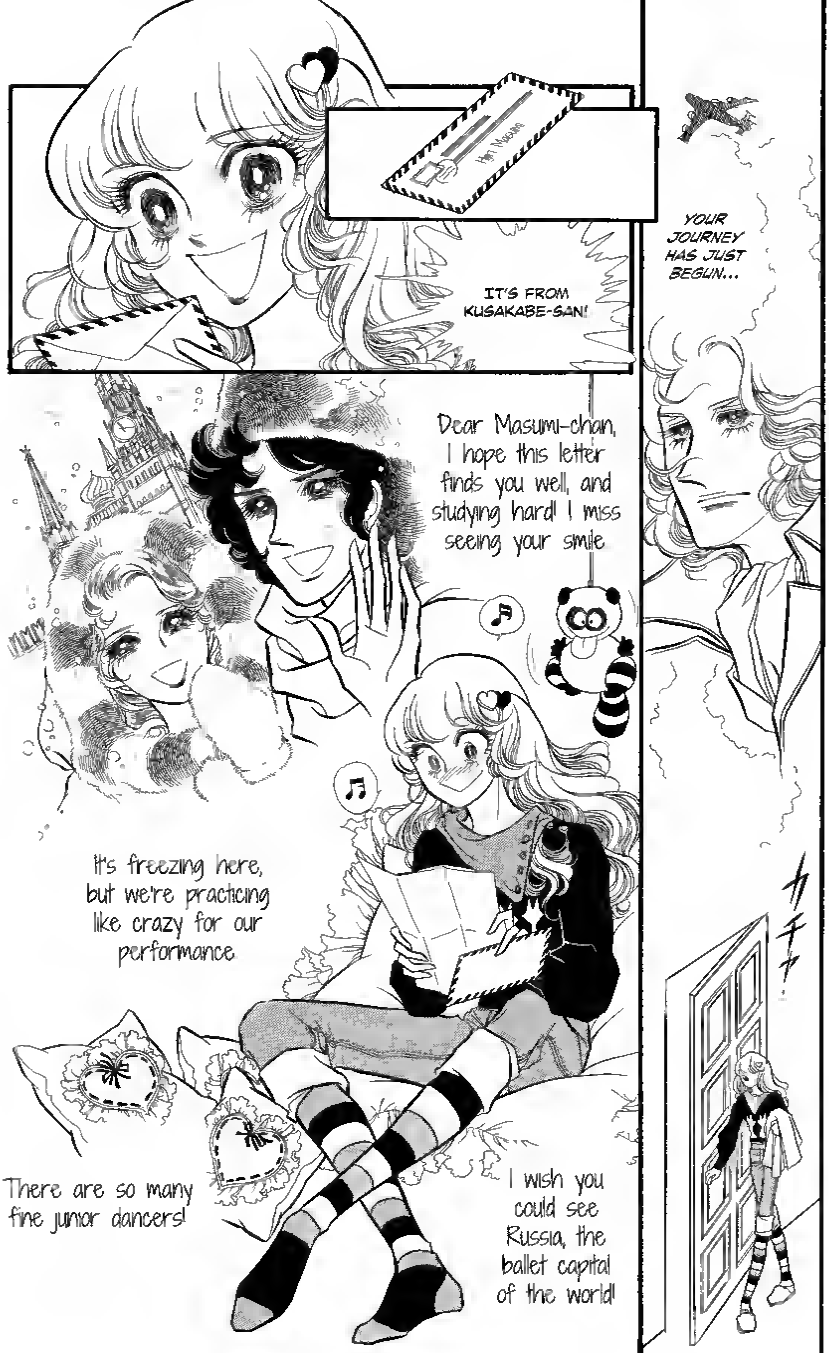
HEY, LOOK!
MOSCOW NEWSPAPERS!
OUR CLASSMATES SENT THEM TO US!
Oh!
SHOW ME!
ME, TOO!
DON'T TEAR IT!
ANYONE READ RUSSIAN?
IT SAYS...
I CAN, A LITTLE BIT.
"AT THE WELCOME RECEPTION, L. MAXIMOVA AND S. KYOGOKU DANCED *GISELLE* BRILLIANTLY."
PICTURES! SHOW ME THE PICTURES!
L. MAXIMOVA!?

SO THIS IS L. MAXIMOVA
SHE LOOKS..
JUST LIKE FERNANDO DESCRIBED..
"THIS JUNIOR DANCER HAS A GREAT FUTURE AHEAD OF HER!"
GOOD FOR KYOGOKU-SAN!
"YOUNG S. KYOGOKU WAS SURPRISINGLY LYRICAL.
SFX Pun pun (Clap clap)
BREAK IS OVER!
LET'S GET BACK TO WORK!
SILENCE, PLEASE!
GO TO THE BARRE!
KYOGOKU-SAN...
Huh?
DANCED WITH HER...
HEY,
WHO'S THIS L. MAXIMOVA, ANYWAY?
THE PRODIGY DANCER...
DO YOU KNOW, MASUMI?
"ALL OF MOSCOW...
"IS ANTICIPATING HER PRINCESS AURORA.
"TICKETS ARE SELLING OUT."
HOW AWESOME!


SFX: Tii (Thump)
I WONDER WHAT SHE'S LIKE...?
HER LEGS... HER ARMS?
SHE HASN'T EVEN DEBUTED YET...
BUT THEY SAY SHE'S A PRODIGY!
SHE ENCHANTS PEOPLE!
THE WORLD IS WAITING TO SEE L. MAXIMOVA!

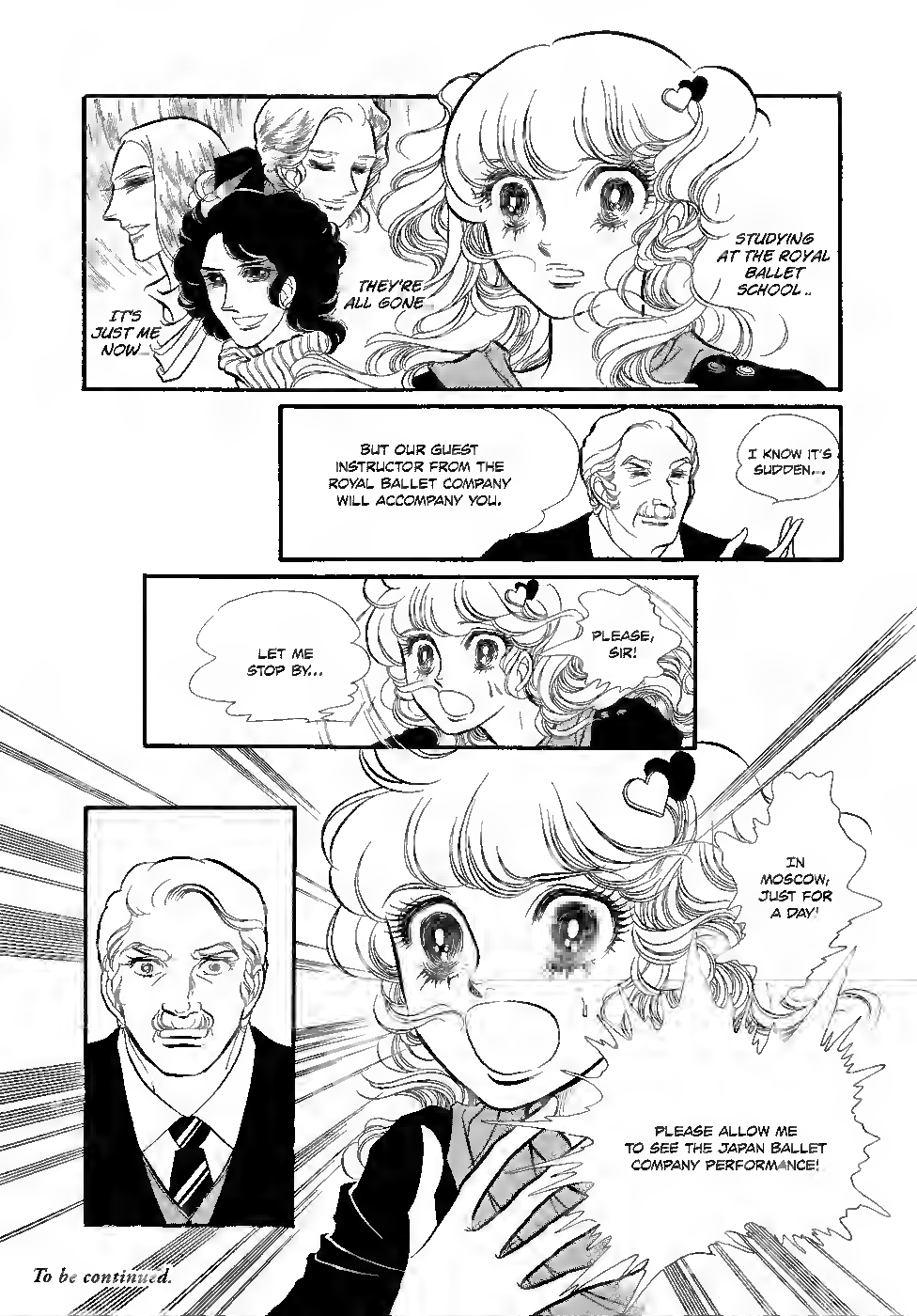
HUFF...
HUFF...
HUFF...
HUFF...
HUFF...
HUFF...


WILL I EVER...
BE ABLE TO DANCE LIKE THAT?


IT'S FROM KUSAKABE-SAN!
YOUR JOURNEY HAS JUST BEGUN...
Dear Masumi-chan, I hope this letter finds you well, and studying hard! I miss seeing your smile
It's freezing here, but we're practicing like crazy for our performance
There are so many fine junior dancers!
I wish you could see Russia, the ballet capital of the world!

SFX: Kacha(Click)

We Japanese dancers still have so much to learn.
L. Maximova, the prodigy, dances with such confidence and sensitivity
HIJIRI MASUMI, PLEASE REPORT TO CONFERENCE ROOM 2 IMMEDIATELY
Conference Room 2
THE ROYAL BALLET SCHOOL!?
WE'RE SENDING YOU...
CORRECT
AND STAYING FOR ONE MONTH.
YOU'LL BE LEAVING IN TWO DAYS...
TO THE ROYAL BALLET SCHOOL IN LONDON


IT'S JUST ME NOW...
THEY'RE ALL GONE
STUDYING AT THE ROYAL BALLET SCHOOL..
BUT OUR GUEST INSTRUCTOR FROM THE ROYAL BALLET COMPANY WILL ACCOMPANY YOU.
I KNOW IT'S SUDDEN...
LET ME STOP BY...
PLEASE, SIR!
IN MOSCOW, JUST FOR A DAY!
PLEASE ALLOW ME TO SEE THE JAPAN BALLET COMPANY PERFORMANCE!

To be continued.

SWAN
ARIYOSHI KYOKO
MARIS
SCANNER
AOZORA
TRANSLATOR
MARIS
PROOFREADER
MARIS
EDITOR
MARIS
QUALITY CONTROL
SHOUJO MANGA MANIAC
WWW.SHOUJO-MANGA.ORG

A Collection of Illustrations

SWAN ILLUSTRATION COLLECTION

Swan Lake

SWAN
ARIYOSHI KYOKO
MARIS
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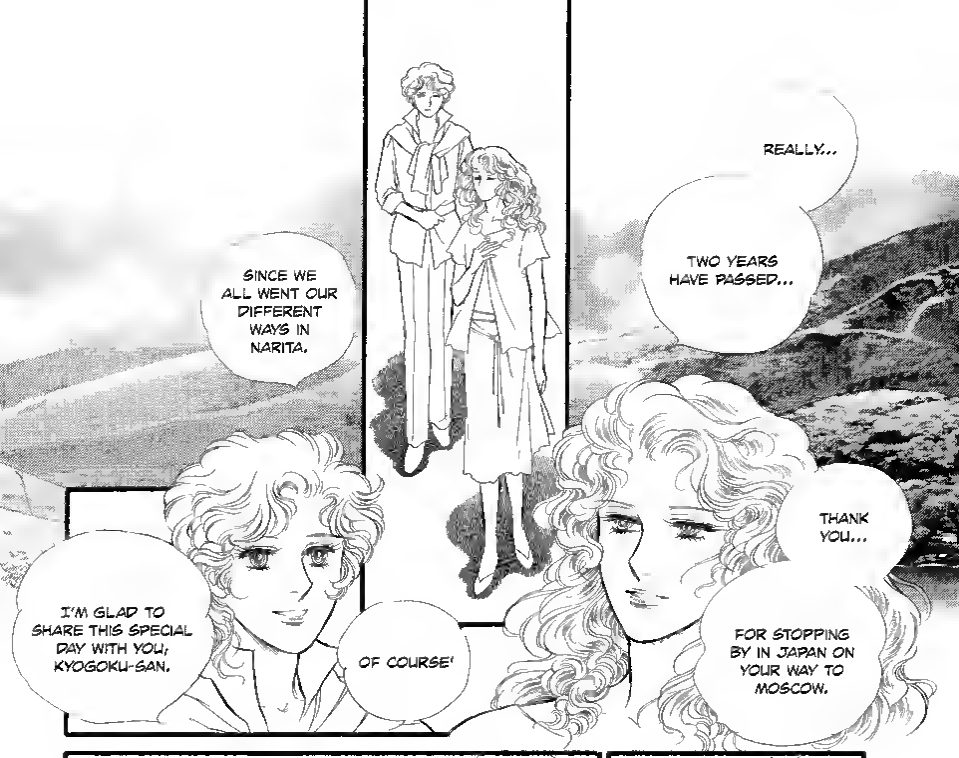
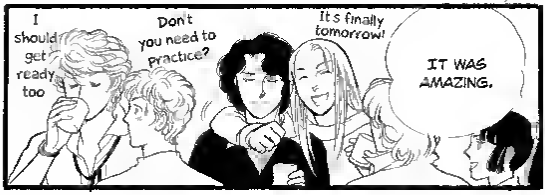
SWAN 白鳥 variation

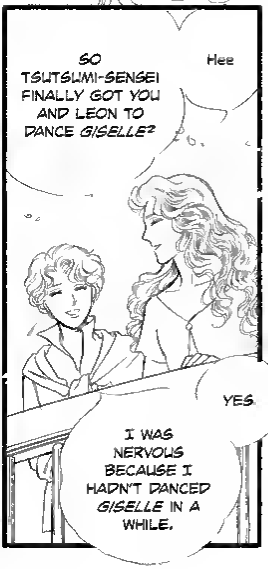
This is set between Swan *and* Maia.
I wanted use this story to show how everybody danced during that time.

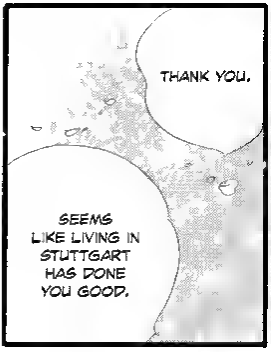
◆ *Aryoshi Kyoko*

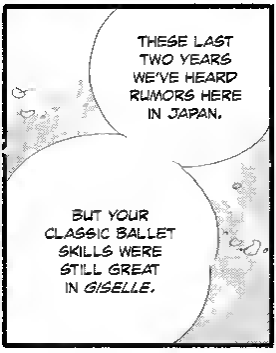
This episode continues the story of Masumi and Leon, as they go to Moscow to see Maestro Sergeyev. Previously, they danced Giselle *in Japan, and it was a big influence on both of them.*


SINCE WE ALL WENT OUR DIFFERENT WAYS IN NARITA.
REALLY...
TWO YEARS HAVE PASSED...
I'M GLAD TO SHARE THIS SPECIAL DAY WITH YOU, KYOGOKU-SAN.
OF COURSE!
THANK YOU...
FOR STOPPING BY IN JAPAN ON YOUR WAY TO MOSCOW.


I should get ready too
Don't you need to practice?
It's finally tomorrow!
IT WAS AMAZING.

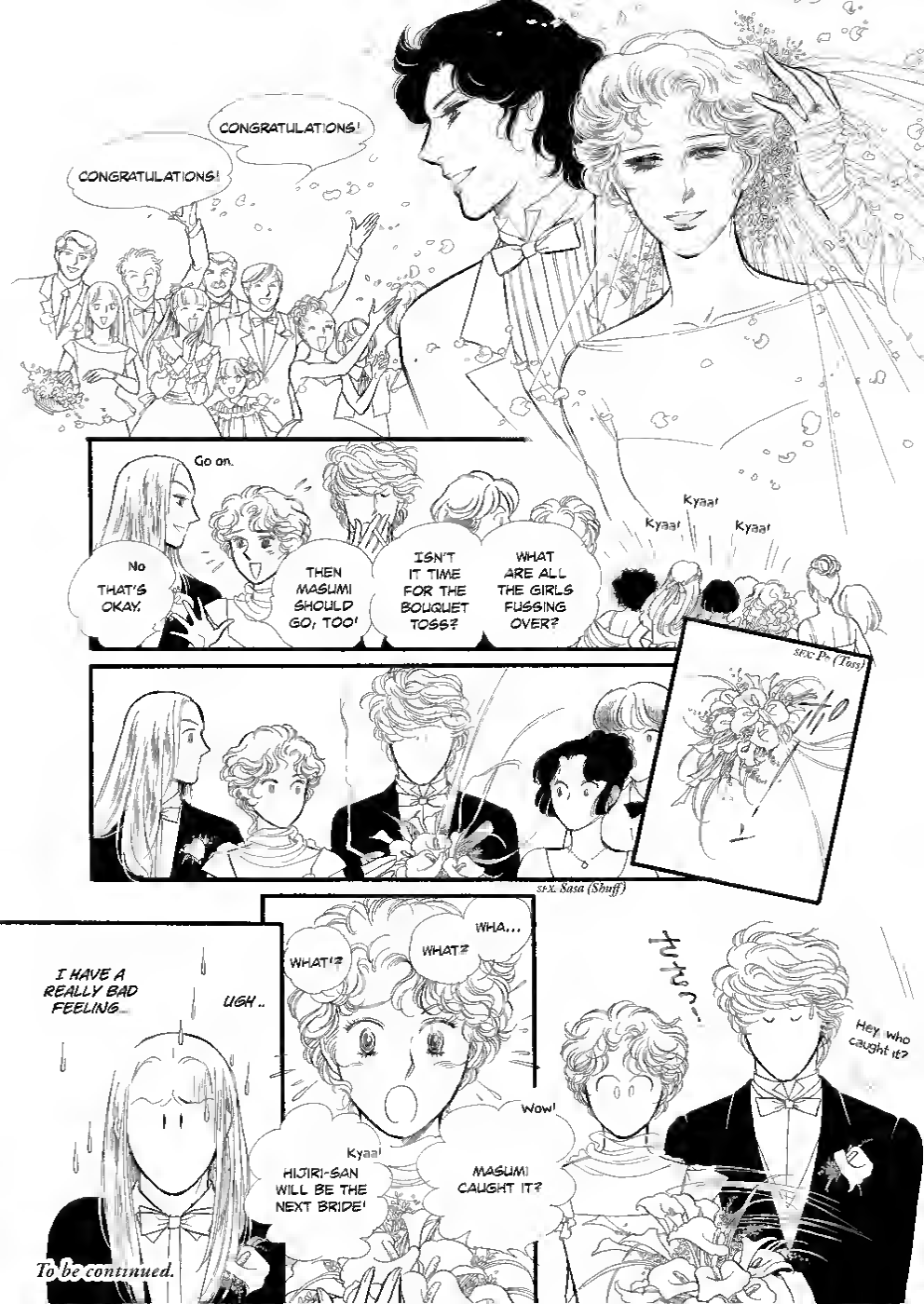

SO TSUTSUMI-SENSEI FINALLY GOT YOU AND LEON TO DANCE GISELLE?
Hee
YES.
I WAS NERVOUS BECAUSE I HADN'T DANCED GISELLE IN A WHILE.


THANK YOU.
SEEMS LIKE LIVING IN STUTTGART HAS DONE YOU GOOD.


THESE LAST TWO YEARS WE'VE HEARD RUMORS HERE IN JAPAN.
BUT YOUR CLASSIC BALLET SKILLS WERE STILL GREAT IN GISELLE.

AND IN YOUR PERSONAL LIFE?
NOT THAT CLOSE.
HE ONLY RECENTLY STOPPED YELLING AT ME.
AND HOW'S YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH LEON?
...
BUT LEARNING GERMAN IS REALLY TOUGH.
YES.
I SOMETIMES FRUSTRATE LEON.
THERE'S ONLY BALLET BETWEEN US.
NO.
UM...
IS THAT WHAT YOU THINK?
THE WONDERFUL RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN KYOGOKU-SAN AND KUSAKABE-SAN...
IS IDEAL FOR DANCERS.
I...
HAVE ALWAYS ADMIRED YOU BOTH.
REALLY.
CONGRATU-LATIONS,
YOU TWO.
THANK YOU.

KYOGOKU-SAN IS BEAUTIFUL..
Like Princess Aurora!
SO PRETTY AND DAINTY.
LIKE A SYLPH!
HOW LOVELY.
...


CONGRATULATIONS!
CONGRATULATIONS!
Go on.
No THAT'S OKAY.
THEN MASUMI SHOULD GO, TOO!
ISN'T IT TIME FOR THE BOUQUET TOSS?
WHAT ARE ALL THE GIRLS FUSSING OVER?
Kyaa!
Kyaa!
Kyaa!
SFX: Pr (Toss)
SFX: Sasa (Shuff)
I HAVE A REALLY BAD FEELING...
UGH..
WHAT!?
WHAT?
WHA...
Kyaa!
HIJIRI-SAN WILL BE THE NEXT BRIDE!
Wow!
MASUMI CAUGHT IT?
Hey who caught it?
To be continued.